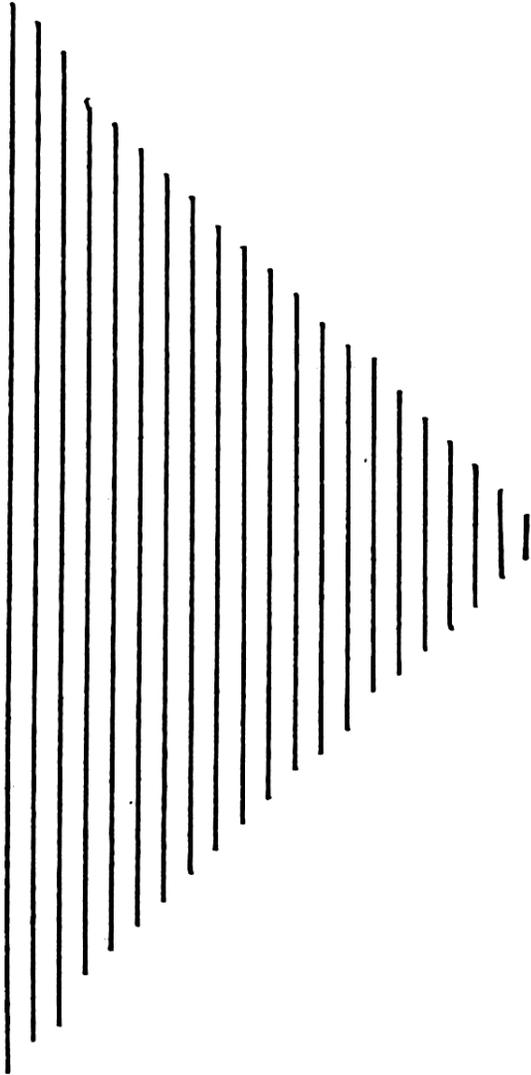


# BROWSINGS in EPHESIANS . . . . .

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## Browsings in Ephesians

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**“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.”**

Some think that this wonderful letter from the prison-house in Rome to the Ephesian saints was actually a circular letter sent to all the little communities of believers that Paul had visited, and that each several copy had had inserted in a blank space, left for that purpose, the name of the particular assembly for which it was intended. It was, in its first form, a sort of blank cheque, without the name of the payee.

We may never know the truth of the matter, and it would not do just simply to speculate about it. There is, however, a possibility that it may be true, and we should seek to realize not merely on the certainties but also on the *uncertainties* of Scripture. We might carry the analogy of the cheque still further, and think of the letter as a cheque in which indeed figures have been inserted, but where the drawer has left blank the space for eagles, dollars or cents, to be filled in by the payee as he will. Mr. Bramwell Booth, of the Salvation Army, once had a cheque tendered him, with the amount to be filled out as he had faith, and his faith partially failed him, and his bank account suffered because of it, to the tune of, perhaps, £4,000. So it is with us constantly. We do not realize on all our blessings.

The blank space for the name of the addressee, however, suggests a question. How appropriate is the superscription, "saints and faithful," for the little association of gatherings with which we are individually connected? Could each rightfully lay claim to one of the copies? Are its members saints? Are they actually faithful brethren? Usage has associated with the name "saint" high and lofty virtues, and the word, "saintliness," with such noble consecration of life to God and man, such beauty of character, such ideal motivation, such unselfishness of service, that through these there dimly shine out the "excellencies of Him" who has "called us out of darkness into His marvelous light." Saints, in this accrued sense, in fact fulfil God's purpose, as Peter phrases it, in calling them.

And "faithful." It is a lowlier word than "saint," yet implies such devotion to duty and office that perhaps no higher encomium may be uttered, and our Lord commends it to us as the object of our ambition, in His parable of "The Talents," by the "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

As I write, my thoughts have traveled far away from America to the lonely island of Tanna, in the distant Pacific. The island has been visited by a veritable plague that has been sweeping away life after life, and a party of natives and a black follower of Jesus, a tried companion of that noble missionary, J. G. Paton, are grouped on the beach with their belongings, ready to sail away and leave the stricken to their fate. The white man is speaking: "Abraham, they are all going; are *you* also going to leave me here alone on Tanna to fight the battles of the Lord?" "Missi, our danger is very great

now. Missi, would you like me to remain alone with you, seeing my wife is dead and in her grave here?" "Yes, but considering the circumstances, I cannot plead with you to do so," he answers. "Then, Missi, I remain with you of my own free choice and *with all my heart*. We will live and die together in the work of the Lord. I will never leave you while you are spared on Tanna."

And Abraham, another son of the father of the faithful, proves true to his word: "So saying, with a light that gave the fore-gleam of a martyr's glory to his dark face, he shouldered his box and bundles back to his own house."

In this instance, as it should in all cases, the word "faithful" is a happy companion to the word "saint," in its technical sense of "one separated to God." One who is "faithful" to his position as a saint near to God, in being faithful unconsciously assumes all that lovely character which the world, at large, has joined to the word.

But the word "faithful" has also another link with the word "saint." In the New Testament the Greek word for it is often translated "believing." You will remember that upon a notable occasion our blessed Lord once said to a disciple: "Be not faithless, but believing." A legitimate translation might also have made it: "Be not faithless, but faithful." This suggests that the prime essential for faithfulness is believing faith. Now faith is that which leads us to God. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him." This being led to God then is the first step in that separation of which saintship speaks. Then the welcome from God seals the adventure

with His benison. It is, in each case, the old, old story of the younger son dramatized and etched in living light. The prodigal comes to the Father. The Father runs to meet the prodigal. The Father's arms and the Father's welcome home ennoble him with "saintship." Another prodigal is now a saint. What sweet attractiveness there is in each retold story. And so long as the prodigal keeps joyously believing in that blessed Father, he remains faithful.

A writer, whose name slips me, has characterized a saint as one "who makes it easier for others to come to God." How the stories of other prodigals all down the ages start again the music and the feasting! How the welcome of these prodigals preaching the gospel, with the light of its gladness in their faces, has been summoning home poor wanderers, just as that of the prodigal in Luke 15 has done. How in this way do they continuously make it "easier for others to come to God."

**"Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."**

It is somewhat astonishing to find, throughout the epistles, that the apostle's prayers are elicited by *good* news of believers. Consider for instance, the 15th and 16th verses of this first chapter of Ephesians, the fourth and fifth verses of the first chapter of Philippians, the third and fourth verses of the first of Colossians, the second and third verses of the first chapter of 1 Thessalonians, as illustration. This fact surely bespeaks in

clarion tones the universal need of Christians for the prayers of others. The invocation of grace and peace on the saints and faithful is as clamant of a similar need. Occurring regularly at the beginning of all Paul's letters, we might regard it as something stereotyped and formal, a set greeting that the apostle has become habituated in using. Actually, however, it is anything but stereotyped. This is confirmed by the fact that it occurs in variously modified forms at the close of his letters also. Their necessity shouted aloud to him, and the response of his heart to that necessity was overflowing and abundant.

Possibly also this double benison, "grace and peace," whispers to us of the Greek and Hebrew forms of salutation. The Greek constantly began his letters with a "*Chaire*" (hail), and he also used it as a spoken greeting. The word "*chaire*" is believed to be derived from "*Charis*" (grace). The Hebrew, in his turn, was accustomed to say, "*Shalom aleikum*" (peace be with you). If the spirit of these greetings in their true significance always shed its fragrance among the assemblies of the "saints," they themselves would then be promoters of the apostle's benediction. One of John Newton's most popular hymns has often attested in power our individual indebtedness to "grace," and has breathed forth a prayer that we ever need to utter:

"Could we bear from one another  
What He daily bears from us?  
Yet this glorious Friend and Brother  
Loves us, though we treat Him thus,  
Though we render good for ill,  
He accounts us brethren still.

Oh, that *grace* our hearts might soften!  
 Teach us, Lord, at length to *love!*  
 We forget—alas, how often!—  
 What a Friend we have above.  
 Yet when home our souls are brought,  
 We shall love Him as we ought.”

Grace and peace then serve to cement together the assembly of God. They serve to make it indeed “spiritual,” for, with these prevailing, it is *carnal strife* that is “excommunicated” and the “communion of saints” is practically strengthened. How sad it is that after greeting an assembly in this way, Paul is in one instance compelled to write: “And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal. . .for whereas there is among you *envying and strife*, are ye not carnal and walk as men?” And that Corinthian lament is not mute for us even to-day.

Notice also that these Christian blessings well forth from two inexhaustible springs: “From God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Campbell Morgan, in his “Crises of the Christ,” has beautifully rearranged several well-known phrases from the 1st chapter of John that reach their climax in *grace* as the revelation of God.

In the beginning was the     *And the Word became flesh*  
   Word  
 And the Word was with     *and tabernacled among us*  
   God  
 And the Word was God     . . .*full of grace and truth.*

Yes, grace and truth *became* (as a literal rendering would word it) by Jesus Christ. And the marvelous

"*kenosis*" of the second of Philippians rehearses the grand message, while like the echo of the sweet angel-song near Bethlehem we men "of good-will" breathe in that peace that impregnated the divine mission of our Saviour, for verily we *know* "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich." "Grace be with all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity."

An entry in the diary of Frederic S. Arnot, devoted African pioneer missionary, reads: "It is refreshing to meet with a case of hearty gratitude from even one of those for whom one seeks to labor. A young man has been lame a long time from a broken toe which would not heal. I have been dressing and doctoring it for three weeks every day. He came to me to-day with his face beaming with joy, saying that at last he could walk. 'I have nothing but myself to pay you with,' he said, with tears in his eyes."

Paul is one of the grateful ones. "Wherever God's grace is discerned, there praise breaks forth as surely as earth answers the touch of spring with flowers." Sometimes he gives thanks, sometimes he blesses, and as often as he catches sight of the Cross, God's great peroration of grace, "all the stops of his nature are pulled wide open, and his whole being vibrates" with laud to God.

Surely the heart of Him who once said, "Where are the nine?" and who had "meat to eat" that His disciples knew not of, listened oft in gladness to praising Paul.

And in our next verse it is our privilege to join our blessed Lord in His glad listening to a characteristic outburst of praise:

**“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”**

Now just as music is compounded of notes, so praise is compounded of words, and the study of Scriptural words is a highly remunerative investment. They are not merely used with wise discrimination but with lofty inspiration, and every nuance of meaning becomes a beacon light along the broad highway of truth. There are two words in the New Testament translated “blessed.” “*Makarios*,” found over and over in the beatitudes of Matthew 5, was a term once used of the gods alone. It carried an implication of the divine with it. It laid stress on that which was intrinsic. The word in our text, “*eulogetos*,” however, speaks rather of that which is *extrinsic*. It confers beatitude through speech. It is distilled like the dew in the warm intercourse of affection. We get our word “eulogy” from it, but eulogy *here* is too artificial and veneered to breathe its spirit. “Blessed” is unrivalled as a translation. It is solemn, joyous and inspiriting. “Hath blessed us” is not merely the equivalent of “hath given,” as we might think when reading the text. There is an implication of *speaking* into blessedness. Something of this thought breathes through Faber’s familiar words:

“Whate’er He blesses turns to good,  
And unblessed good is ill.”

The word now has something of a religious atmosphere. It savors of the incense of the sanctuary. When John

G. Paton, of the New Hebrides, was leaving the Mildmay Conference after delivering an address, the whole audience arose, and as he passed down the aisle, showered him with "God bless you's." Their effect upon Paton affords us something of that religious atmosphere. "Long ere I reached the door of the hall, my soul was already prostrated at the feet of my Lord that I had done so little for Him, and I bowed my head to cry, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us.'"

The word "blessed," in this way, worshipfully introduces us to the Person whom Paul blesses and who blesses us, "*the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

The great poet Goethe once flung aside the curtain of a window in his house, and pointing to the western sky uttered the simple word, "*Klopstock!*" Klopstock was the German Milton, and had painted magnificent poetic pictures of just such a scene as the bared window disclosed. For one who had read him, no word or paragraph or page could have so accurately sketched a scene otherwise beggaring description. The sky was unique in its heavenly glory. But for one who had not lived in Klopstock, the name would have meant practically nothing. So the precious words "of our Lord Jesus Christ" breathe out volumes, for those who know Him, as to the blessed Person from henceforth to be known as *His* God and Father. Personal, living, experimental, revelatory knowledge of Jesus Christ, imbibed from the Scriptures, from daily communion, from meditation on Christ's wonderful mission—these, and these alone, disclose in all its unrivalled splendor the magnificent import of a conception of God found in none of the religions, none of the philosophies, none of the poetic dreams of the poets of this

world, nor yet in the visions of seers unillumined from above. Even the Old Testament illuminati had but seen God dimly, afar off, in the moments of their brightest revelations. When, however, "He who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light unapproachable," finally in "the last of these days" spake "in Son," when "the effulgence of His glory and the express image of His Person" "tabernacled among men," when "the day-spring from on high" broke over the plains of Bethlehem, very soon the "people that sat in darkness saw a GREAT LIGHT, and to them that sat in the valley of the shadow of death light had sprung up." It was the "light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." In it God the Father "was declared." This is not poetry, it is glorious truth.

So we do not need the words of the rest of this precious verse to enlist our hearts in dear Paul's joyous doxology, "BLESSED be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But the text does not pause there. It singles out one of His transcendent glories. This God whom we know through Jesus Christ is a superlative GIVER. He first gave His Son, and then His Son gave Himself, and in rapture of delight the apostle exclaims, "How shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" "All things" is even bigger than our text, is greater than "all spiritual blessings," yet "all spiritual blessings" are too big for us, with our feeble powers, to begin properly to appreciate.

Over the entrance to the palace at Versailles, there is an inscription, "A toutes les gloires de France" (To all the glories of France); and right over the portal to this wonderful epistle we seem to see inscribed, "All the bless-

ings of Heaven," a striking synthesis to much of its content. And these blessings are ours. Yes, but how practically? Alas, how often we may burn into our hearts an Old Testament challenge, "Know ye that Ramoth Gilead is ours, and we take it *not?*"

The expression "spiritual blessings" has been variously interpreted by many preachers and commentators. These differences should not lead to our putting on theological war paint, showering our brethren with "shibboleths," with inevitable battle as a climax. There are many ambiguities in Scripture, words legitimately capable of variant interpretation. This does not require arguing. It is too patent for any candid reader to deny. It is not a defect in Scripture. Each interpretation has its *blessing* for us, and we should seek to reap a double harvest from them. Thus the expression now before us has been interpreted as "non-material good," "material good that blesses our spirits," while Alexander Maclaren, prince of excellent preachers, suggests; "He calls them spiritual because they are imparted to the waiting spirit by that Divine Spirit, who communicates to men all the most precious things of God." That is a rousing suggestion when we are numb from inability to grasp properly that which is ours. We must rely upon God's blessed Spirit. Oh, how near He comes to our need!

"Closer is He than breathing,  
And nearer than hands or feet."

"All spiritual blessings" ours through Him? Let us then be filled with Him!

"*In heavenly places in Christ.*" The close of the chapter clearly shows us the meaning of the expression "heav-

enly places." They are not on the earth, they are where Christ has gone; they are where Paul heard unutterable things, where he received abundant revelations, the bliss of which was to linger with him all his life; they are there where "neither moth nor rust corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal;" they are there, "far above all principality and power and might and dominion," there secured to us in Christ, who is God over all blessed forever. And we are going there.

An old ritual of the Mass opened with the words, "*Sursum corda*" (Up with your hearts), and surely the call comes strong and clear to us from out of the depths of this truly expansive passage. It gathers strength from the glorious Cross on earth beneath and rises to the crown and throne in heaven. *Sursum corda.*

"Cease, ye saints, your occupation with the sorrow scenes  
of earth;  
Let the eye of faith be opened, use the sight of second  
birth."

"*In Christ.*" We must not leave our subject without briefly considering this very important phrase. Linguists and theologians discuss at length its possibilities. In one place it may mean one thing, in another something else. To some it is merely "by." To others it is "atmosphere" and "identity," to others "representation." To others it is simply "in." They prefer an "aura of mystery" around the word. There are, perhaps, little difficulties inherent with each interpretation. For the purposes of this paper it is the golden cord on which, throughout the chapter, all the pearls of our blessings are strung. We pick it up in the very beginning, "faithful in Christ Jesus;" it gleams out in our present text, "blessed . . . in Christ;" it

shimmers through God's great election, "chosen us in Him;" it forms the solid substratum beneath the "favored in the Beloved;" it is a thread of Divine glory in the "redemption through His blood," and it flashes out in full splendor in God's magnificent purposes to head up all things "in Christ,"

"In the dispensation of that glorious time,  
When the bells of heaven, with melodious chime,  
Ring in all the fulness of the plans of God;"

so that in view of it we may well join in that grand Episcopalian doxology:

"Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

**"According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love."**

The phrase, "according to," or, "according as," occurs about twelve times in the first three chapters of this epistle. It is a prominent copulative in Ephesians 1: 3-14, which the eminent New Testament Greek scholar, A. T. Robertson, has, from a linguistic viewpoint, pronounced a "noble period" in Paul's writings. Its nobility of thought, too, far surpasses its linguistic beauty, and these "according to's" are harmonious links in the sequence of that thought. They are liaison officers in the stately march of the argument.

The phrase in our text yokes the subject of our last "browsing" to that of the present. It not merely suggests the harmonies of God's way with us, the fine interlacings of His providences, but in some sort makes each the gauge of the other. "All spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," are lined out against, "Chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy." In each verse is GOD, infinitely wise, infinitely mighty and infinitely loving; in each there are infinitesimal animalculæ, such as ourselves, the objects of His grace. The "blessing" of the one pairs off with the "choosing" of the other. Limned in the background of each there is, on the one hand, "*heaven*," which Christ has gone to fill, and on the other "*earth*," the foundation of which He laid in the long, long ago. "All spiritual blessings" then blend themselves with the "holy and without blame before Him," so that the verses seem in their relation to each other something like the bass and treble clefs of a glad musical symphony. The orchestra is tuning in to the chanting of choirs celestial and terrestrial.

If then, at the close of the first chapter, the writer of the epistle is on his knees in humble supplication that the eyes of our understanding might be enlightened to "know" other features of God's great plan of redemption, we may very rightly fall upon our own that the light of the "glory" of our subject be not entirely veiled from our eyes. It is a good thing for us to rest awhile in the "valley of humiliation," for all around us, in this epistle, pile skyward the mountain-peaks of God's high resolves, and everyone of us should be a resolute member of the great Christian Alpine club. "Resolute" indeed, and also enthusiastic! There should be no "luke-

warmness" in our hearts as to God's great "Election Day." Mr. Moody once approached a stranger on the verandah of a hotel at Northfield, and in his characteristic way inquired, perhaps somewhat abruptly, "Are you a Christian?" The stranger, taken aback, answered a little stiffly, "What do you think?" "Not red-hot," shot back Mr. Moody, and walked away. The remedy for this lukewarmness is meditation, contemplation, aspiration. We must get the "lure of the heights" in our hearts. That wild philosopher, Nietzsche, once very wisely remarked: "Look too long into the abyss, and the abyss will begin to *look into you.*" We do not want the abyss, but we do want these blessed mountain heights to look into us, so we must keep looking at them.

The peak now before us is "Mount Election." It is hidden from view behind the word "chosen," but in the original the words "elect" and "choose" are almost alike. Consider then the word itself. "Choice" here necessarily involves knowledge, foreknowledge. It has to do, speaking anthropomorphically, with the "*mind* of God." But the power of "choice" is a peculiar mark of the "will;" it is a distinct characteristic of God's "conative powers," as the learned call them. Finally, "choice" is intimately bound upon God's love; that is in part the "motive" behind the will. So that God, in all that He is, is operative in this choice. Response with *all* that we are is the only logical thing for us.

Unfortunately the words "election" and "predestination" have been veritable trumpet-calls to battle, and the endless logomachies and conflicts that have raged everywhere, have been the "kill-joys" of quiet, Spirit-guided meditation. Before considering the matter fur-

ther, therefore, I shall introduce you to a "battle of words" in the 1st chapter of 1st Thessalonians, which subserves just the *opposite* end, which is a sort of homeopathic remedy for Calvinistic and Arminian fevers.

The words "election" and "beloved" are the two parties to the quarrel, and, as in the most of history, the war is waged over a question of "property," although in this instance it be but "property" in a prepositional phrase. The Authorized Version reads, "Knowing, beloved, your election by God," and the Revised Version and others read, "Knowing, beloved by God, your election." The latter translation is probably more correct, nevertheless we have here one of those delightful ambiguities of Scripture, which, if properly absorbed, become fresh fountains of blessing within. There is no doubt about the truth of each rendition. Taken together they serve to suggest that our "choice" by God is instigated by "love," and that this particular "love" is nourished in our "choice" or "election." He loved us, and therefore He chose us, and because He had chosen us, He loved us even the more.

"Chosen not for good in me,  
Waked from coming wrath to flee,  
Hidden in the Saviour's side  
By the Spirit sanctified,  
Teach me, Lord, on earth to show  
By *my* love how much I owe."

A further study of this theme but emphasizes our thesis. Centuries ago a great man, one of the great men of the ages, not long before his death told a little people; "And because He *loved* thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them," while on another occasion he

says: "The Lord did not set His love upon you nor choose you because ye were more in number than any people, but because the Lord *loved you*. . .hath the Lord brought you out." This marriage of Love and Choice is further beautifully illustrated in God's election of Christ: "Behold My Servant, whom I have chosen, My *Beloved*, in whom My soul hath found its delight." It is no wonder therefore that David in psalm and song (Ps. 65:7) should exclaim: "Blessed is the man whom Thou chooseth."

But our text does not permit us to rest on an unqualified "chosen," but links this "chosen" with "in Him." The "Him" is the Beloved Servant, who had Himself been "chosen," that same "Beloved" in whom we have been "taken into favor." Thus evidently our choice is indissolubly bound up with Christ, and our indissoluble link with Christ is "faith." So when Peter addresses us as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father," the foreknowledge seems to be focussing all its light upon us as "men of *faith*," "*believers*." And when our "faith" and God's "love" mingle thus with one another in God's "foreknowledge," all the mists of the mystery of "predestination" dissolve themselves into a beautiful rainbow-promise of holiness and blamelessness before Him. "*Without* faith it is impossible to be pleasing to Him."

If anyone be otherwise minded, however, that is his right, and we may say to him with the apostle: "But we are bound always to give thanks for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation." "*Blessed* is the man whom the Lord chooseth."

Over the main portal of the beautiful Milan Cathedral is inscribed: "Our pleasures are but for a season," "Our sorrows are but for a season," "Only that which endures is important." This mark of importance is therefore stamped indelibly upon God's choice: "*before the foundation of the world.*" That choice is also thus linked with a great event, at which all the morning stars sang and "the sons of God shouted for joy."

But the jubilation of the sons of God had never been, had not the foundation of the world been antedated by the glorious day of our election.

And as if further to establish the importance of that time the New Testament repeats the words, "Before the foundation of the world," three times, and in each instance it seems as if the chimes in the clock tower of the "Cathedral of the Ages" were ringing out: "His loving-kindness, oh, how strong!" Listen! "Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given Me out of the world, be with Me where I am, that they may see My glory, for Thou *lovedst Me before the foundation of the world.*" "As a lamb without blemish and without spot, who verily was foreordained *before the foundation of the world.*" "Chosen us in Him *before the foundation of the world,* that we should be holy and without blame before Him in *love.*"

Notice that last clause: "That we should be *saints,* without blame before Him in love;" this is that to which all the Father's will is directed. "I will that they be with Me, where I am;" this is that to which all Christ's will is directed. "As a lamb without blemish and without spot;" this is the infinite cost of that very costly

“choosing in Him before the foundation of the world.”  
Should we not love both Father and Son?

“Shout, O earth! from silence waking,  
Tune with joy thy varied tongue;  
Shout, as when from chaos breaking  
Sweetly flowed thy natal song.  
Shout! for thy Creator’s love  
Sends redemption from above!

“Downward from His star-paved dwelling,  
Comes the Incarnate Son of God,  
Countless voices, thrilling, swelling,  
Tell the triumphs of His blood;  
Shout! He comes thy tribes to bless,  
With His spotless righteousness.

“Call Him blessed on thy mountains,  
In thy wild and citted plains,  
Call Him blessed where thy fountains  
Speak in softly murmuring strains:  
Shout, O earth, and let thy song  
Ring the vaulted heavens along.”

**“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath taken us into favor in the Beloved.”**

Somebody has said that familiar truths often lie “bed-ridden in the dormitory of our souls alongside exploded error,” but we must rouse them up and have them take possession of us. Contemplation helps.

A famous picture of the Crucifixion shows only the shadows of the three crosses, falling sombrely athwart the hillside, while the story itself, in all its great and tragical wonder, is graved in the faces of the onlookers—Roman soldiers, Jewish rabbis, disciples, a fanatical throng of peasantry, men and women. We sometimes sing,

“Oh, how our inmost souls do move,  
When gazing on that cross,”

and well they may, yet surely each of us yearns for deeper appreciation.

The verses proclaim the fruits of that wondrous work, and we are sharers in its benefits, and the commingling of work and fruit should engrave on face and life their infinite significance. Scientists have calculated that there is sufficient energy stored away in a single grain of radium to keep an electric bell ringing for thirty thousand years, and the subject of our meditation, properly assimilated, contains inexhaustible, unending springs of joy, waters that never run dry. Indeed, Mount Election is the *Saints' Mount of Transfiguration*. Its glories blaze forth in character. The objects of its blessing are clothed in immaculate righteousness, spotlessness, holiness, and stand unabashed before God. The saint to be with Him, *must* be like Him. To tread the golden streets of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, he must be “undefiled” (Rev. 21:27). Heart-filling fact it is that,

“The sons of ignorance and night,  
May dwell in the Eternal Light,  
Through the Eternal Love.”

This is the theme that emancipates Jude from the morass of Stygian history in the earlier part of his epistle, and sweeps him, in an utter jubilation, into one of the grandest doxologies in the New Testament: "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless in the presence of His glory, in exceeding great joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be the glory and majesty, dominion and power, before all time, NOW, and unto the eternal ages. Amen."

Mark well the phrase, "In exceeding great joy." Its position in the quotation from Jude is similar to that of the "in love" of Eph. 1:4. This suggests that the "in love" describes the believer. And "in love" with such a God he may indeed well be. How can he very well help it? In love, in exceeding great joy, that is it! Yet, as most know, there is little punctuation in the Greek manuscripts, and some think that the "in love" properly links with the "predestinated," so that it is God who, in love for us, predestinates us. Here indeed is an unquestionable truth. Here also is another delightful ambiguity, and read either way, it anoints us with the oil of gladness. It baptizes us in heavenly joy.

Notice, moreover, how the verbs "choose" and "predestinate" carry us along in a warm current of live, logical thought. The original of "choose" suggests a "picking out" from among others, while the Greek of "predestinate" implies that a "dividing mark" separates us to God, shuts us up to Him. The thought is widened and deepened in the "people for a possession" of the epistle to Titus. According to a custom of ancient times, property in a contract was specified as "as much as can be plowed around" within a certain designated time.

The Greek word for possession, *peripoiesis* (made around), hints at the latter thought. So then we are "picked out," "marked off," and "encircled" for God, His own, His very own.

But the "good pleasure of His will" does not stop here. It reaches out more and more. It is characterized by Francis Xavier's missionary watchword, "*amplius*" (farther afield). For the spotlessly righteous God has a place of the closest relationship, into which the predestinated are brought by the united will and effort of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. By the Spirit they are "born of God," by Christ Jesus they are given an exalted, legal position of "sons." This is the magnificent declaration of the prologue of John's Gospel: "To as many as received Him, to them gave He *authority* to become the children of God, even to those that believe in His name, who were born" (John 1: 13). This is indeed adoption, and to this blessing the Father predestinated us. In it the Holy Trinity unites us, in the bonds of filial affection, as members of God's happy family. "Consider (then) what manner of love the Father, Son and Holy Spirit have bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God." Yea, "consider." It is not simply "behold."

The "by Jesus Christ unto Himself" has its beautiful counterpart in Roman Law. To quote Faussett, "*A son and heir often adopted brothers*, admitting them to his own privileges. By the Roman law of adoption, the adopted child was entitled to the father's name, possessions and family sacred rights." Here in other form we have the theme of Paul's jubilation in the 8th of Romans: "And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint-heirs

with Christ.” And in delightful accord with the “by Jesus Christ unto Himself,” Galatians in its turn salutes us with, “And because ye are *sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His *Son* into your hearts, shouting, ‘Abba, Father.’ ”

¶Methinks here one may catch the joyful exclamation of the blessed Son, the Captain of our salvation, quoted in the 2nd of Hebrews, “Behold I and the children that God hath given Me.” It is another and better “These are my jewels” of the noble Roman mother, Cornelia, who when asked by invaders to bring forth her jewels, presented her seven sons. It is the music of an ennobling affection.

This sequence of “character,” then “sonship,” in Ephesians is but a twin thought to that of the ascending scale of God’s great purposes for us, as set forth in Romans 8, all things working together for our good: “For whom He did foreknow, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that HE might be the first-begotten among many brethren.” The First-begotten not only admits us, as in Roman law, to His own privileges, but the Father for that purpose stamps the Son’s blessed likeness upon us.

Thus all bondage and fear are things of the past. Such a spirit have we not received. Free indeed we are, for the Son Himself hath set us free (John 8: 36). From the heights of Mount Predestination the shout of “sons” resounds, for the Great Liberator has adopted a race of slaves as His children. “He came to preach deliverance to the captives, to set at liberty them that are bruised.”

I would like to place you deep within some camera obscura, and there, shut out from the world, in its peaceful seclusion display in the central glass the onward march of the ages, disclosing that glad evangel in the millions in which its power has been dramatized. You should read their story, you should behold the transformation of their lives, the drunkard made sober, the unclean pure, the selfish purged of every desire but to "please another," the proud wearing the diadem of a meek and quiet spirit, in the sight of God of great price, and all with the hope of heaven and home shining upon their faces. For this however we have neither time nor power. A single tale from Harold Begbie's "Other Sheep" must perforce suffice us.

She was a poor, demon-possessed woman. Some of the dramatic details of the demon-possessed in the Gospels were strongly etched in her life. Obsessed and harassed, her horrific condition became absolutely intolerable. "Neither her husband nor her neighbors doubted for a moment that she was the darling of the demons." She was thrown down and torn by her familiar spirit. She was subjected to attacks of convulsion. A pall of the deepest gloom shadowed her, though she wrought reputed cures of disease and became sought after far and wide. The cup of blessing that she offered to others defied her every effort to raise to her own lips. In the midst of this deep distress she heard of the God of the Salvation Army and attended a meeting of the local corps in a near-by village. "I did not know that Christ had ever cast out devils; all I knew at that time was His Name, and that people in trouble prayed to Him, nothing more." She came, she saw, and *He* conquered.

Through His Name and power she was set free. Wondrous was the transformation in her life. From the servant of sin and sorrow she became a messenger of peace, she proclaimed the glad news, she did the work of an evangelist. "Her prayers, I am told," says the narrator, "were of extraordinary beauty. She always began, her eyes raised to heaven and her arms uplifted, with the words, whispered in an imploring tenderness, 'O God, you are my Father, *my Father!*'" Through every fibre of her being thrilled the emancipation proclamation of the sons of God.

Her story was to "the praise of the glory of His grace," and so is yours, and so is mine. Are we praising? Mr. Spurgeon was once invited to preach an extempore sermon on "One star differeth from another in glory," and eloquently he spoke. But on another occasion he said, "When I come to speak of glory, I can only *stammer* about it." He must have been thinking of such glory as this. And as measured against their glorious theme, all other efforts are but stammering, yet the stammerer may sing unhindered:

"In loving-kindness Jesus came,  
My soul in mercy to reclaim,  
And from the depths of sin and shame  
Through grace He lifted me.

From sinking sand He lifted me,  
With tender hand He lifted me,  
From shades of night to plains of light,  
O praise His Name, He lifted me."

**“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”**

There are four Greek words in the New Testament referring to redemption, and these divide into pairs, one pair emphasizing the thought of a “price paid,” and the other “loosing” from bondage. Thus the imagery is born of commerce. And as the vilest of all vile forms of commerce is the “traffic in human flesh and blood,” so the noblest is the redemption of the slave from slavery. As the one is degrading, so the other is ennobling and uplifting.

But the fettering of the body is as nothing to the enslaving of the soul. Physical degradation spells ignominy, but spiritual degradation spells infamy. The “redemption” of our text, however, wipes both clean. It knows no barriers. It ultimately sets free the body from the “bondage of corruption” and emancipates the soul from the shackles of sin. “The wideness of God’s mercy is like the wideness of the sea.” Its healing waters are deep as the need of man; they flow out unto the uttermost of his necessities.

Our text lays the foundation of all the blessings shining out in the chapter, as well as of others displayed elsewhere upon the pages of God’s glorious New Testament record. Moreover the trail of a word through Scripture is often like the wake of a ship through phosphorescent seas. It *gleams*. And if, like the knight of old, we “follow the gleam,” marvelous revelations of truth flash out upon us. And this is true of the redemption

series of verses. Stronghold and dungeon of the enemy open their gates before the triumphant summons of the "Captain of our Salvation;" the keys of citadels are surrendered and the weary prisoners leap forth. So it was when "He came and preached deliverance to the captives." Follow with us a little in this victorious progress.

Our citation is from Paul's letter to "Titus," a Greek, a Gentile, and vividly suggesting the Roman by his name; the recipient of grander news than ever electrified the "Eternal City" or rang in trumpet tones through its Forum: "OUR GREAT GOD AND SAVIOUR—who gave Himself for us, that He might *redeem us from all iniquity* and purify unto Himself a people for a possession."

"Great God and Saviour" was a title blasphemously given to the Roman Emperors by adulant fools, and it is apparently appropriated by Paul for the One only worthy, abating not one scintilla of its significance. What are the Emperors of Rome beside God? What are the conquests of Rome to the conquests of Redeeming Love? What are all the peoples of Rome to the people purified for Christ's possession? What all the opponents of Rome to the panoplied hosts of evil from which the redeemed have been delivered? What the duration of that "Eternal City" to that of the possessors of life everlasting, redeemed from iniquity? Let the ages make answer.

But iniquity brings many a curse in its train. Eminent among these is the curse of the law. So "Christ hath *redeemed us from the curse* of the law, being made a curse for us." Someone has likened man's life to a pathway between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, between curse and blessing, now swerving to this side, now to that, into the sunshine of the one or into the darkness and doom

of the other. The threat of the "mount that might be touched," however, that "burned with fire" lurid with the same curse of broken law, looms larger and gleams more fiercely athwart the paths of all the sons of men. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the Law, to do them." Fearful is the curse of a father upon a child, and if the Father be God, what words may tell the horror! And grimly real have been the thunders of Sinai to many, and grimly real condemning conscience.

God, however, could not rest in that. An "Anointed One," a Messiah, the Christ, is consecrated to the work of redemption, to become the curse-bearer.

Yet God's work ceases not even here. He obliterates every memory of sin and curse, so that those that seek refuge in Him are "*justified* freely by His grace," cleared of every charge "through the *redemption* that is in Christ Jesus." And still more.

Old influences are dissolved. Peter says Christ's precious blood redeems us from "*our vain conversation*, received by tradition from the fathers." What a tremendous change that was for Paul. How different his ways after the voice from heaven called him from "breathing out threatenings and slaughter" to the inbreathings of Divine inspiration and the pathways of life-bringing service. "He had often read how Jehovah redeemed Israel with a mighty hand and outstretched arm. He had followed their story of salvation from danger and distress—when Jehovah of Hosts raised up saviours. The Psalms had sung their impassioned music to his soul, now plaintive like the cry of a bird with a broken wing, now tender with compassion for the poor and the sad, now charged

with a burden of a conscience-stricken heart. The awful, universal need of redemption must have pressed its mystery upon him as a problem without answer. He felt the world's sad heart beating, and caught the still, sad music of humanity sighing through the immortal strains and pilgrim lives of the poets and ancestors of his people." And when the light on the Damascus road had closed his eyes for a time to the things of sense, and the stirring, thrilling voice of the Heavenly Visitant had rung within his ears, and there flowed through all the channels of his being the soothing, healing, life-giving message of Jesus, the Messiah of the World, henceforth was it his to proclaim with quickening power to the uttermost ends of the earth:

"'Twas great to speak a world from naught,  
'Twas greater to *redeem*."

Henceforth his was

"The mighty ordination of the pierced hands."

The mists and vagaries of "vain tradition" had been dissipated in the clear shining of the Light of the World, the dawning of a morn without a cloud.

And the end of all such pathways, however shadowed with earthly trial and tribulation, is the glory of heaven. "The sound of many harpers harping," and the chanting of hosts of the *redeemed* "*out of every people and kindred and tongue and nation,*" saying, "THOU art worthy." It is the "Beloved" of Ephesian story, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world, and we would close with New Testament allusions to Him as God's Beloved. They fall into rank and keep step with our theme of redemption, everywhere.

The first is the note of prophecy and bespeaks His character: a character utterly necessary for Redemptive Love. "Behold My Servant (*pais*, child) whom I have chosen; My Beloved in whom My soul hath found its delight. A bruised reed will He not break, and smoking flax will He not quench, until He send forth judgment unto victory."

And so for you and me it should be that,

"Earth has nothing sweet or fair,  
Lovely forms or beauties rare,  
But before my eyes they bring  
Christ, of beauty, source and spring."

The Jordan baptism follows. Immersed beneath the waters of that historic river, He is consecrated to death for us, fulfilling in figure that righteousness that was consummated at Calvary, in deepest reality. Here again, of God is He proclaimed the Beloved Son, while the Spirit of God, as "the bird of love and mourning," seals His mission with its lovely testimony.

But "death" was not enough. Coming "kingdom glories" must speak through prophetic vision of Him "who was raised again for our justification." So on lovely Hermon He is transfigured before them, His vesture shines as the light, and from the "excellent glory" a voice "sweet as harp's melodious voice," "loud as many waters' noise," hails Him once again as God's "Well-Beloved."

Yea, indeed, "The Father loveth the Son and hath given all things into His hands." And the Redeemer is *our* Beloved also.

**“Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He hath purposed in Himself; that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him.”**

We love the Authorized Version, from which the above is a quotation. We love the stately and elevated flow of the language. Its venerable and venerated English, unfolding sacred thought, laves our tired spirits in refreshing streams of reverent gladness. Sometimes it clothes its theme so that it blends with the pealing anthem of the organ and the music of sweet-voiced choirs, or breathes out the living freshness of some fair spring morning, mingling with it the symphonies of softly flowing brooks and the song of feathered choristers. Its English, if ever English *was*, is like the voice of inspiration.

Nevertheless there are other versions, equally accurate, sometimes even more, that either emend its thought or supplement its meaning. There are, in fact, as we have for some time been insisting, intentional ambiguities in the Greek, that hint at double and even triple blessing for us. Let us profit from them, not in garnering contention, but in an ingathering of joy.

In his Critical and Grammatical Commentary, Bishop Ellicott states that the Greek verb, translated “abounded” in the above quotation, is susceptible of both active

and passive meaning and is so used by Paul, and that a better rendition of the original in this instance would be, "Which He hath caused to abound toward us." Such a change of course lends other force to what follows. The Authorized Version implies that "wisdom and prudence," are God's meters, used in meting out His abundance to us, while his own rendition assures us that that same abundant grace is shown in the *impartation* of all wisdom and "discrimination" to the Church. Their common thought is of the abundance of grace, however. To this a whole sermon might be devoted or an entire volume consecrated.

You will remember that the dear apostle, who wrote this lovely epistle, once found a heavy burden lightened by God's assurance that His grace was "sufficient" for him, so that he learned to glory in the infirmities that rendered it necessary. That word "sufficient" suggests the measure of abundance. The apostle John discovers in Christ an ocean fulness, crying: "Of His fulness have all we received and grace on grace." Here is the glory of "the Only-begotten of the Father," grace. Then in our Ephesian chapter we have the "grace upon grace" streaming forth in the whole current of revelation, until in our present text it is "grace abounding," which very appropriately gathers head at the mention of "redemption by His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace." We are reminded of the exclamation of a poor woman, to whom all natural blessings had been stinted, who, looking upon the ocean for the first time, rejoiced that *here* at last was something of which there "was enough." The apostle in the poverty and strait of his sin had seen another ocean shortly after the glory on the Damascus road, and ever since it had been for him,

in its divine refreshment, like the "Rock that followed" the Children of Israel, an unlimited supply.

If we now consider Ellicott's idea that all "wisdom and discrimination" have, by God's grace, been imparted to the Church and ponder the reason for its introduction right after "redemption by blood" another avenue of thought opens to us. The wisdom and discrimination are then limited to "spiritual" wisdom and discrimination, for otherwise the statement would scarcely be true. We are thus reminded that "*only through the cross*" do God's ways with man, either for the past or the future, become intelligible. In it wisdom and intelligence are ours. It is thus the "mind" or "thinking" of the Spirit, and is "life and peace."

It is "life" for it puts us into living communication with the One in whom is life. It is "peace," for it makes us delight in the ways and plans of God, who apart from the cross seems as if He had forsaken the world and abandoned the race of man to hopeless despair. The "abounding grace" speaking to us through hallowed memories of Christ's sufferings "lends a light to every age." Thus the cross like a lighthouse towers over the wrecks of the Past and illumines with an undying glory the entire Future. It renders intelligible to us the exaltation of "Jesus Christ of Nazareth" to the throne of the Universe; it makes us eagerly and joyfully and comprehendingly to anticipate the "fulness of the times," the consummation of the ages, with which the apostle now continues.

From one of the peaks of the high "Rockies," upon the sudden lifting of mists that had surrounded and enshrouded him, John Muir, that eminent naturalist and ardent theist, once exclaimed: "To think that He should

plan to bring us feckless creatures here just at the right moment and then flash such glories at us."

Thank God, the Cross has rolled aside the mists from our spiritual vision, has unfolded the "mystery" of God's great and grand purposes, "to gather together in one," "to sum up again together" all things in the redeeming Christ. We stand upon the threshold of eternity, and man's history, overshadowed by the bright cloud of God's atoning love, "like a many-colored dome of glass stains" its white radiance with a golden glory.

There is some difference among commentators as to whether the verb *anakephalaïosasthai* (rendered, "gather together," or "head up"), in which with its onomatopoeic sibilance we seem to catch the seething of the sea of time along the shores of eternity, includes the thought of Christ's headship. Ellicott, from a lexical and contextual viewpoint decides against it. Another commentator, J. N. Darby, of equal piety and great spiritual insight, decides for it. To quote the former: "In a writer so profound as St. Paul this is far from impossible. The derivation of the word, however, (*kephalaion* and not *kephale*), St. Paul's use of it in its common meaning, Rom. 13: 9, and most of all the context, which points to a union in Christ not under Christ, to His atonement rather than His sovereignty, render it improbable."

The main argument, however is defective. It is *because* of the atonement that "God also hath highly exalted Him," it is because of the atonement that "God hath anointed Him with the oil of gladness above His fellows," it is because of the atonement that He is appointed "*Heir* of all things," and wherever His own are

gathered together, now or in the ages to come, Jesus is crowned Lord of lords and King of kings.

“He is coming, He is coming  
Not as once He came before,  
Lowly infant, born in weakness  
On a humble stable floor  
But upon His cloud of glory  
In the crimson-tinted sky  
Where we see the golden sunrise  
In the rosy distance lie.”

Only thereafter comes this “heading up.”

**“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance (In whom also we were made a heritage, R. V.), being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first hoped in Christ.”**

A convict in a mid-western prison was recently advised that he had inherited a fortune of some \$150,000. Six short years would set him free and then such bliss as money might purchase. How joyous his anticipation, how glorious emancipation day. Thrilling the click of the key in the lock, the wide swinging of the prison door, the calls of a thousand alluring pleasures.

We also are prisoners in a failing flesh, but some day, somehow, whether at the summoning shout and the trump of God, amidst rising myriads, every one of them a brother, or at the still, quiet call of the Beloved, the

prison doors shall swing wide for us, and heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, we shall enter upon *our* inheritance. Shall we use that inheritance well or shall we abuse it?

The answer comes to us in the words of the Revised Version, "In whom we also were made a heritage," instance of another blessed ambiguity of the original. For we *have* an "inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away," reserved in heaven for us. We have not yet entered upon it, but we are predestinated to it by the immutable purpose of one "who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" and just as surely as His sun tinging the eastern sky with its radiance, in the dimness before the dawn, assures a coming day, so the word of prophecy, "made more sure" irradiates with its indissoluble hope our prisoner spirits.

And we *are* "a heritage" and some day God's own possession (ver. 14, R. V.) shall be completely redeemed and with utter purity and with utter wisdom ours, the inheritance shall neither be misused nor abused, but used to the uttermost of enjoyment, as we shall ourselves be to "the praise of His glory." So the two translations of our two noble versions coalesce and still further ambiguities fuse into unity for our encouragement and consolation.

The "in whom" of our translations is another reminder of the One to whom we are eternally indebted for it. One of the characters in Goethe's fine idyl, "Hermann und Dorothea," says: "*Denn der Anblick des Gebers ist wie die Gaben erfreulich,*" which we may freely render: "A sight of the Giver, is, like His gifts, a spring of joy." But the Giver here is the chief source of joy. Without Him we are poor no matter how vast the inheritance.

With Him we are rich, take what He will away. The sunbeam is warm and bright for sight and feeling. It gladdens the vision and caresses the flesh, but when the sun stops shining, it passes quickly. Our inheritance is all that the most poetic imagination might envision for it is the love-thought of God. But the love-thought would congeal and freeze, were God, the Lover, denied us. Christ not merely gave "Himself for us" but He gave Himself to us, and it is that astonishing thing that makes heaven heaven.

Yet the Scriptures do not belittle heaven, the place. They shower it with glories. They weave its beauties into a golden dream. It is "Jerusalem above, the Mother of us all." It is the city "that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God." It is a substantial reality and not an unreal phantasm. And that reality flashes out into a vision of all manner of precious stones, gleaming with the splendor of God, who is Himself its light. We seek such a city. What fools we were, did we not.

Then it is "paradise," a park. It soothes with its verdure. Its fields "lie decked in living green." Its streams ripple and bubble between their banks. Its waters sparkle and quicken. Its fruits refresh, heal.

And if these thoughts suggest weariness and wounding, is it not the Ephesian overcomer, himself, who eats of "the tree of life in the midst of the paradise of God?" "He that drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst" said the prophet of Samaria's well. The fountain is there forever.

Finally, it is "home, sweet home." It is the many abodes, "mansions," of the Father's house. Each dweller in the "house" is a member of the glorious "family of God." Every domestic felicity of earth is crowned by

a "far better," and throughout its love-life, there is shed the love-peace of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. It is not a "summation of negations," as some have pictured it, but is an "eternal yea." It is an affirmation of every good, Christ Himself the triumphant answer to every question. What better inheritance could there be?

And what shall we say more? Its life is a service of song and a song that spells service. Music is harmony and everything there is harmonious. "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of Him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." Yea, because "this man" lives there, "Both the singers and the players upon stringed instruments shall say: 'All my springs are in Thee.'"

The reference in the "first hoped" of our text is apparently to Jewish believers, but it by no means denies the same blessing to the Gentile. The "first" necessarily implies a second, and the second involves a "first." Somebody has said that no one can mount to the heights of faith, who has not first known the depths of self-despair. Now Hope is the daughter of Faith. With faith in nothing, there is hope in nothing. With faith in Christ, real and adequate, there is hope of everything. And when he who has learned self-despair in the rough school of experience scales the topmost peak of faith, his vision of hope may compass no more sublime conception than that vile man should come to be the "praise of God's glory." Let this become intensely personal with each one of us. Let each one of us walk again in retrospect through the grim valley that Paul walked, where all the spectres of evil beset his path and

he cried, "Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?" Let the "curse of the law" sting its way once more into our hearts and wither them with its despair; then let us cleave our way upward through the inspissated gloom into the circumambient and pervasive glory of the mansions of hope, we, "the praise of His glory," who is all perfection, and let us drink again "into that Spirit," for no other power will be adequate to sustain us there and persuade us that we do not dream.

Ah, that is indeed a "living hope," yet, as F.B. Meyer says, "How little does the wailing infant, over whose cradle glistens the coronet, won by the stout arm of a soldier-ancestor, understand of the inheritance to which he has been born. The ancestral home, the far-spread lands, the noble rank, the prestige of an ancient and lofty lineage—all these things are his; but years must pass ere they can be truly realized or appreciated. And how much less do the most saintly and heaven-taught spirits conceive of the inheritance which is ours so soon as we become the children of God through faith in Christ Jesus."

Somebody tells the story of an old Scotch woman who once moved from a basement to a sunny garret. Asked her reason for moving she replied: "Ye canna hear Matheson (the blind preacher) preach and live in a cellar." The narrator calls this a "wonderful tribute" to George Matheson. Shall we not right here and now render the same tribute to our beloved Paul? Shall we not in anticipation dwell in the eternal mansions?

"Oh home of fadeless splendor,  
Of flowers that fear no thorn,  
Where they shall dwell as children,  
Who here as exiles mourn.

Strive, man, to win that glory,  
Toil, man, to gain that light,  
Send hope before to grasp it,  
Till hope be lost in sight."

**"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession (God's own possession, R. V.), unto the praise of His glory."**

The translators supply "trusted" in the above quotation to ease English ears, as the original omits the verb, which the reader is expected to fill in to suit the context, a procedure much more common to Greek than to English. Exegetes have differed as to the proper word to supply, and have inserted, according to their several preferences: "hoped," "trusted," "are." These are indeed all more or less possible, so that the inalienable right inheres to select from them as may be judged proper, with due regard to the reasons valid in each case. No matter what the "selection" however, you will always find some one to oppose it, yet thought and exercise are good and it is through these that "our profiting will appear."

Spiritual exercise is as necessary for the mind and heart as is physical exercise for the muscles; and thus Scripture is so constructed as to elicit it. For the average Christian, the world is a world of hurry and worry, and hurry and worry tend to kill both thought and thought-

fulness. Our Lord has exhorted us to "labor not for the meat that perisheth, but for the meat that endureth unto everlasting life" and the present day method of supplying "canned" spiritual food has its dangers. Our diet should be varied according to our variant need and our advancement in the school of experience.

"The word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" might well be the theme of some spiritual song. Philip Melanchthon, the friend of Luther, just before his departure "to be with Christ," was heard chanting: "I will not any more eat thereof until all be fulfilled in the kingdom of God." Most Scriptural truths should be the music of the heart and the heart should teach the lips its melody. In days of old, the Psalms were framed to metre and metre became the handmaiden of music. "Let God arise and let His enemies be scattered" was the song of Cromwell's spirit at the rising of the sun over Dunbar, heralding the victory to follow. Yet the Psalms, with all their nobility, exhale themes inferior to those of our Christian To-day, and the words we are now considering, "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation," might well supply the *motif* for some noble Christian oratorio. "Peace on earth, good-will to man" was its wondrous prelude on the plains of Bethlehem, and the song of the fifth of Revelation is its inspiring finale. It is the "word of truth." It commands our utmost confidence. It is "the gospel of our *salvation*," a song of "freedom," of deliverance, and might indeed bubble up from the heart, leap to the lips and light the eye with its gladness, blending with the closing jubilation of the Psalms: "Praise God with the sound of the trumpet; praise Him with the psaltery and the harp; praise Him with the timbrel and the dance; praise Him with the stringed instruments and

the organs; praise Him upon the loud cymbals; praise Him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let *everything that hath breath* praise the Lord. Praise YE the Lord."

The words, "after that ye believed" are really simply, "having believed," and do not in themselves suggest any interval of time between faith and sealing, as some have thought. The question of how soon sealing follows believing has engendered much controversy, and while the discussion of such subjects is perfectly right and profitable, the great thing for us is to be warmed and illuminated with their meaning, that they may become vital energizers of our life, that spiritual fruit may be garnered.

The initial stages of the believer's journey, as controlled by the Spirit, are so wonderfully glorious, that we might well feel lured to retrace the way, fragrant, as it should be, with sacred memories, in order that we may rejoice together. Here New Birth and Adoption, twin brothers each, follow their forerunner, Belief. Each stage is lighted with some precious Scripture: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" seemed once like some mighty mountain barrier, straddling the way to heaven, but now marks the place of the clear running of the fountain of water of life. "To as many as received Him, to them gave He authority to become the children of God, even to those who believe on His name" (adoption) links faith with the blessed Captain of our Salvation, its Author and Originator, who welcomes each pilgrim to the glorious army of the sanctified, the sons of God. Here the banner of faith is raised high above the marching ranks, having inscribed upon it: "We are all the sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 26). Then

the band strikes up the glorious anthem of the Redeemed: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His *Son* into your hearts, shouting 'Abba, Father.'" The evil harpies of fear are thus evicted (Rom. 8: 15) and across the shining vista of the future gleams "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Ah, truth is indeed often stranger than fiction, and, in this instance, how far more glorious!

But we leave this retrospect, which supplies us the atmosphere for the thought of sealing. (Breathe deeply, brother!) Sealing indeed is involved in all that has gone before. It is, first, God's blessed authentication of our faith and of our sonship. In a speech delivered at the famous council in Jerusalem Peter says: "And the heart-knowing God bare them (the Gentile believers) witness, giving them the Holy Spirit" (Acts 15: 7, 8). It was the seal of their faith. Authentication is the idea in, "Hath set to his seal that God is true" (Faith's affirmation). It marks them as truly believers, men of faith. This is supplemented by the Spirit's witness: "The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God." We, "the sanctified" (Heb. 2: 11), are all "of one" (Father). We are "God's own" and we are set aside to Christ, the First Begotten, the Captain of our Salvation. So the Indwelling Spirit, by the very fact of His indwelling is the seal of sonship. Our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3: 16). That He inhabits them affirms that they are His own. This connects the thought of sealing with the idea of proprietorship, which is also evidently the idea in the sealing of the servants of God in the seventh of Revelation.

"Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price" is surely a delightful fact and how intimately it links us

with those sacred scenes that precluded the great Act of Purchase: "Having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (perfectly); "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me;" "And all Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine, and I am glorified in them." Is it not significant then, that when the Lord thus gathered His own around Him, this blessed Sealing Spirit is promised, is the Spirit "of promise," as our Ephesian passage puts it, as if it would recall by the words, lingering memories of that sacred time?

"The earnest of our inheritance" carries our story of blessing still further. "The earnest is always of the same nature as, and a part of, the inheritance. Therefore since the Holy Spirit is the 'earnest,' the conclusion is plain, that the inheritance is nothing less than God Himself. Heaven is to possess God and to be possessed by Him." So writes an eminent preacher, and without excluding other thoughts, this is certainly a lovely aspect of and a happy peroration for this richly fruitful verse. Centuries before one of the "children of faith" had written into a glowing context "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup. . . the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage." Though he knew nothing of the truth we have to-day, the writer of the Psalm had a foretaste, an earnest, of that which was to follow. "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and on earth there is none beside Thee," he exclaims in another place. How the words often put us Christians to shame. Are we experiencing NOW what is to be the culmination of experience in the "sweet by and by?" That is what is meant by "fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ." That is what the Apostle in part meant, when he said: "Never-

theless I live, yet not I, but *Christ liveth in me*" and the warmth of that thought glows through his "Christ in you the *hope of glory*." Yes, Christ ministered within the heart, by the Spirit who is the earnest of full possession, when "God's own possession" is fully redeemed, is the pledge of an ever expanding fortune,

"For infinite unfoldings of Jehovah's love and grace  
And infinite unveilings of the beauties of His Face  
And infinite disclosures of the splendor of His will,  
Meet the mightiest expansions of our finite spirits still."

**"Wherefore, I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of His calling."**

From the lofty heights of Ephesian blessing, radiant with the promises of God, the Blessor, with their vistas of past magnificent purpose, present glorious possession and future shining consummation, we are now privileged to look into the heart of one of the noblest of Christian mountain-climbers, as he kneels in prayer at the summit of a lofty peak, listening to the shouts of other climbers, scaling in "faith and love" the same slopes that he has passed, a faith that is centered on the

“Rock of Ages” and a love that embraces all their fellow-pilgrims, called “saints.”

Here indeed is a lovely spectacle, fit companion view to the scenes we have been scanning, as the current of beautiful thought has lured us upward and onward. How like is the Apostle’s heart to that of the Master, the “Captain of Salvation,” on the mountain-tops of prayer and praise!

It is well to remember that it is the goodness of the Ephesian believers that occasions the prayer. Paul very often prays for those who seem least to need it. Such seeming, however, is mere dreaming, for it is very hard indeed to maintain a steady footing on the heights of Christian experience. It is so easy to slip, and the fall of leaders is more than disastrous for the rearguard. Therefore Satan spreads his most subtle and dangerous snares for the choicest of the faithful. He may leave the rest to the flesh and the world. For these the Apostle has his tears (Phil. 3:18) and supplications; for those his thanksgiving and petitioning.

Notice how suitably thanksgiving and supplication keep company. The faithful stand through God’s goodness alone. It is in His strength that they are such successful climbers. So he can indeed give thanks. Snap the links that bind them to the Throne of Grace, however, and the steep slopes they have so successfully negotiated are then but perilous declivities, threatening destruction. The moments of self-confidence, born of success, are the danger-spots in Christian life. Therefore he supplicates. “Anchor, Hardy; anchor!” was the dying warning of a great sea-captain to his victorious fleet. The aftermath of victory was weakness, and a storm brewed. “Anchor, Christian; anchor!” we may well repeat, for the time

of relaxation is big with danger, and the anchor of prayer, biting deep into the firm bottom of God's almighty power, will alone enable to outride the storm.

Shall we not then pray particularly for our pioneer missionaries and evangelists, our pioneer witnesses to the "truth as it is in Jesus," our pioneer thinkers, as they explore, with the Spirit, the deep things of God? They need prayer. It is the sustenance of their life. Paul, above all others eminent in these fields of Christian usefulness, realized this, and ever entreated the intercession of his brethren for himself.

Let us now consider the prayer a little more in detail. If the preceding portion of our chapter has been called by an able critic a "noble period" in Paul's writings, yet there is a loftiness of thought, a vigor of expression, a nicety of diction, in that which follows, that falls little short of it. Notice the discriminating use of God's names and titles here. "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory," fit the theme of the prayer as no other titles would. "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ" is evidently God revealed in the Person of His Son, a magnificent revelation, unrivalled in grace and grandeur, which the expression "Father of glory" supplements, as if that Son were the very manifestation of the glory, its "effulgence," as indeed the 1st chapter of Hebrews proclaims Him.

Then consider how these two titles clothe the theme of grace and glory that like a golden web gathers the thought unto itself. Had grace ever a more outstanding display than in the "hope of God's calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, the exceeding greatness of His power," towards these Ephesian believers? And has the glory of the Son ever better mani-

fested the "Father of glory" than in the supreme glory to which the Son is raised, "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named...Head over all things to the Church?" (vers. 20-23).

So all dwellers in the universal temple may well shout "GLORY!" as did the dwellers in the tabernacle of old, and priests of God sing:

"Father of glory, thought beyond all thought,"

for such indeed He is.

But properly to appreciate these things, we must have the "spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him," "the eyes of our hearts" must be "enlightened," and for this Paul supplicates. The one "who was obedient unto the heavenly vision" in days of yore, sees in the heavenly vision, and sees, in "seeing Jesus" (Heb. 2: 9), that ultimate glory whither the sons of God are being brought. If the Son of Man once said: "If ye understand not this parable, how then shall ye understand all parables?" may we not add, "If ye perceive not this vision, how then shall ye perceive all visions?" Herein is the living foundation of all Christian development.

Paul is not alone in this assertion. Peter, in entire accord with him, tells us that it is "through the knowledge of God" that "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" are made ours, while John makes the beginning and ending of Christian life to be "knowledge of the Father," knowledge of the One who is "from the beginning." And the Lord, Himself, emphasizes it when He asserts "*eternal* life" to be living acquaintance with "the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent" (John 17: 3).

This then is that through which we gain experimental acquaintance with "the hope of His calling." As those in the second chapter of our epistle are "without hope" because "without God," so here hope finds its sustenance in the knowledge of God. For it is practical experience and not intellectual apprehension that is the object of attainment. Paul calls this calling "a high calling," a "heavenly calling." Samuel Rutherford, about to die, exclaimed: "Oh, for arms to embrace Him! Oh, for a well-tuned harp! I hear Him *calling*, 'Come up hither!'" At that moment, as never before, he knew thoroughly what the "hope" of God's calling meant. It was something for which the knowledge of His God and Saviour, so distinctive a feature of his life of sweet communion, had been preparing him, a final, triumphant experience. A. C. Warburton, head of the Y. M. C. A. movement in Canada, once said, "Boys, when you hear that I have gone, I want you to know that I went with a cheer." Samuel Rutherford "went with a cheer" because he knew God and Christ as not too many know Them. May our last end be like his, and all through this vale of tears may it be ours to,

"Hear Hope singing, sweetly singing,  
Softly, in an undertone,  
Singing, as if *God had taught her*,  
'It is better further on.'"

That very able and learned woman, Harriet Martineau, once said to a Christian: "I do not believe in immortality, but if I did believe in it, I should live a far better life than you appear to live. I should strive more earnestly and bear more patiently. I do not think I should ever be troubled with a fear, or wearied with an earthly

burden. I think it would be all sunlight and joy." *She* evidently considered Hope a singer. Let us set her singing then, for the sake of others, if not for our own. Inestimable, however, is this hope for us also. Alexander Maclaren writes: "It stimulates effort, calms sorrows, takes the fascination out of temptations, supplies a new aim for life and a new measure for the things of time and sense."

**"And what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints."**

Here is the second thing that the Apostle prays we may know. But how to know? Not merely intellectually, and not merely emotionally, but both intellectually and emotionally,

"That mind and heart according well  
May make one music as before."

We are to know through enlightenment of the "eyes of the *heart*," and if somebody reminds me that "heart" in the New Testament does not mean "affections," that alters not the fact that it includes the "affections." It is "the inner man" which comprises both. And the inner man will also control the "outer" man, and in this way "body, soul and spirit" will be played upon by the three moving words: "riches," "glory," "inheritance."

From an intellectual viewpoint and listening to the theologians, the whole verse becomes a battleground. We need but listen at the door "to hear the household jar within."

If, however, we add the "heart," it is no longer the disputings of the theologians that we hear; the theologians are transformed into musicians, wooing music from various sets of tuneful bells, making melody to Christ. For there is a certain reasonableness in each interpretation of the verse, and each interpretation expresses a truth, and each truth should bring us closer to God. Let us enumerate some of them then.

A great preacher believes that the inheritance here is God. The reader who is not acquainted with the original might think that impossible, but in Greek the "his" *might be* "of him;" and the "in the saints," "among the saints," and then we could scarcely interpret otherwise. What a grand thought it is! We have already considered it a little, so will simply let the preacher put and answer a question as to it: "We asked a minute or two ago how God belonged to men. The answer to the converse question is almost identical. A man belongs to God by the affection of his heart, by the submission of his will, by the reference of his actions to Him; and he who thus belongs to God receives God as his possession. The thing must be reciprocal. 'All mine is Thine,' and God answers, 'And all Mine is thine.' He ever meets our 'O Lord, I yield myself to Thee' with His 'And, My child, I give Myself to thee.' It is so in regard of our earthly love. It is so in regard of our relations to Him." Surely this is a beautiful reciprocity.

Then there is a second view that "God inherits the saints." Ellicott calls this exegetically possible, but grammatically doubtful, while W. Kelly pronounces it *impossible*, assuring us that Scripture never speaks thus. He apparently forgets the very probable correct-

ness of the Revised Translation, "In whom we were made a heritage," of Ephesians 1:11. When too we think how these "saints" are robed in the glory of Christ Himself, how rich the glory of that "inheritance" which is all the fruit of Christ's atoning work.

A third interpreter says: "Even so the inheritance of the whole universe, when it shall be filled with glory, belongs to Him, but He inherits it in the saints. It is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints. He will fill all things with His glory, and it is in the saints that He will inherit them."

This is certainly a magnificent prospect. It seems to be almost too wonderful to be true, yet the interpretation is ably supported, and it makes very grand and beautiful music with which to set the heart singing. Moreover it has been connected with the closing verse of the chapter, in which the Church is represented as the "fulness" or "completion" of Him who filleth all in all. The two conceptions then correspond in measure with each other.

But how much do we *know* of it all? How much do these thoughts fill our lives? How much do they control our actions? How much do they color our horizon with the glowing hues of a coming, heavenly morning?

A German litterateur, a long time sick, exclaimed: "Oh that some great, new thought would come and pierce me through and through, and I should be well." Scripture is just full of such health-giving thoughts. Are we then ever sick? If so, why?

**“And what the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the Church, which is His body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.”**

There is a great deal of unutilized power in the world. Edison, America's great inventive genius, once said that it almost drove him mad at times, as he stood by the Atlantic, to see the immense power represented in its tumbling, heaving waters, utterly lost to man—infinitudes of force unapplied, undirected.

And there are likewise great spiritual resources available for the Christian, of which he knows little, and appropriates less. Our verse speaks of “the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe,” but when we look at our lives, where is it manifested? We are in this respect too much like those who do not believe.

It is therefore no wonder that the apostle prays that we might practically acquaint ourselves with our resources. For it is of practical knowledge that he is speaking, even though its ultimate efficacy will only be known in actual resurrection. It is not an intellectual dallying with a dream that he covets for us. He longs

that all the floodgates of our being might be thrown wide open that this "exceeding great power" might flow in and possess us. He would have us all Careys, Livingstones, Arnots, Judsons, Patons, Grenfells, Spurgeons, Moodys, Hodges, Darbys, Arthingtons, Boardmans, Müllers, centres of force in the circles in which we move. Surely it might almost drive *us* mad, as we stand by the ocean of God's power and find ourselves so feeble. Paul could say, "I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." Are we then ever to be content to "live at this poor dying rate?"

The opening of the second chapter of this epistle assures us that we were *once* made alive from the dead, that "God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He hath loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." That is our common experience. Yet the apostle would still have an exhortation for us of this day, as he had for those of his own, "to awake from among the dead," where we sleep as if we were still of them.

That fine Christian missionary, Dan Crawford, has written a little article, entitled "All-at-it," in which in terse and trenchant language he exhorts us to rise as one man, to work all together, to tolerate sluggishness in none, if we are to get things done. It is a thoroughly worth-while message. A long pull, and a strong pull, and a pull all together, *with God back of it*; God, the great, living, loving Energizer of all things, back of it. Then indeed, the "all things" of the apostle will be as nothings before us. But not sooner.

A collocation of words bespeaking power, in this and the following verse, is served up by the commentators as a collation on which to feast both intellect and heart.

For Paul they are the outpouring of an exuberance of joy, the daily experience of his own life. He knows in rich living what each word means. Of the Greek words employed Lange tells us that "*dunamis* is the '*brachium divinum*' (the divine arm), *iskus* (with a play on the root significance) is its muscles, *kratos* is the power manifesting itself, *energeia* (energy), the actual efficiency." Some, using other imagery, liken them to "root, tree and fruit." And do we not all sigh for more "efficiency," more "fruit?"

"Abide in me, and I in you," said Christ. He is the "arm" of the Lord, He is the "root" and the "tree." He alone "giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

To picture to us in a vivid way the might available for us, in our feebleness, Paul now refers to the power that was put forth in the resurrection, ascension and session at God's right hand, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, of the Man Christ Jesus. It is a picture in the truths of which shine out all our hopes. If Christ be not raised, then we are of all men most miserable. Everything is for us pitch-dark. Everything for the world is pitch-dark. The lovely ideals, the epic story, the tender, compassionating love of the "Man of Sorrows," are but vain dreams; our hopes but bitter illusion. Just, however, as the Christians of early days saluted one another with, "Christ is risen," we, after this long time, may respond, "Christ is risen *indeed!*" Our faith has not built itself on "sinking sand" but upon a "rock of Gibraltar." All the intellectual acumen and all the ingenuity of infidelity have here expended themselves for us in vain—"Christ is risen."

And the power that was for Him, is for us. Resurrection of the dead is a mighty work. Who may raise the dead but God? Christ's session at God's hand in glory is a mighty work. In the hands once stretched upon the cross is clasped no idle sceptre. He "who was crucified through weakness" has gathered to Himself all the forces of the Universe. The Man Christ Jesus, "far above all principality, and might, and dominion," sways all things with His word, and He saith to this world "Go," and it goeth, and to that world "Come," and it cometh, and to this might or dominion, "Do this," and it doeth it.

Might is thus controlled by "right," and "right" is animated by "love," and Divine Love is ready to make this might available for our service. "The exceeding greatness of His power" is for us who believe. We are members of that Church, for which, over all things, He is Head. We are His Body, and every nerve and sinew should be energized by His power. We are the completion of Him who filleth all in all.

Thus our chapter closes with the supreme exaltation of Christ. He who has been pictured in the beginning of the chapter as under God the divine Channel of blessing for us, is now blessed with what for Him, because of of the goodness of His heart, constitutes supreme blessing, a place of power, filling all in all, and thus bringing gladness to all, "reading His history in His people's eyes."

"Hail, gladdening Light, of His pure glory poured,  
 Who is the immortal Father, Heavenly Blest,  
 Holiest of Holies, Jesus Christ, our Lord—  
 Worthiest art Thou at all times to be sung,  
 With undefiled tongue,  
 Son of our God, Giver of Life alone,  
 Therefore in all the world, Thy glories, Lord, we own."

## CHAPTER TWO

**“And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins ; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) ; and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”**

Commentators have often pointed out the logical parallelism of the quickening and resurrection of the spiritually dead, in this second chapter, with the resurrection of Christ from among the dead, at the close of the first chapter. The parallelism is indeed perfectly obvious, even to the most casual reader, and though precious in the lessons that it teaches us, we shall, for the moment, because of oft reiteration of these lessons, eschew logic and embrace psychology.

J. H. Jowett tells of a friend who dreamed a very vivid dream. In his dream he saw, afar off on the horizon, a range of sunlit mountains, their lower reaches veiled in a thick, white mist. In an ecstasy of longing

he besought the Lord that he might dwell upon them, when a voice responded: "Thou must first descend into the vale."

Down into the gloomy valley he went, to find the ground all alive with "fierce, ugly, loathsome things." He quickly became aware that these spectres were the incarnations of his own sins. Imagine his horror.

Presently approaching footsteps resounded on his ear, and instinctively he realized that it was his Lord. He covered his face in very shame with his cloak, and bowing his head, waited. Soon the Lord and the sinner confronted one another, standing in silence for some time. How long they thus stood none may know. Minutes sometimes drag themselves out as hours, hours are lengthened into days. What thoughts filled the sinner's heart no one has told us. Perhaps our own experience may whisper them. Very sober and solemn doubtless they were. Finally, however, apprehensively he ventured to withdraw from his face the edge of his cloak and look, and lo, all the loathsome creatures covered his Lord. God had laid upon Christ all his sins.

The dreamer went through the valley *before* ascending the mountains. We, on the other hand, who have already been dwelling on the "sunlit" mountains, are *now* to descend into the valley, "*lest we forget,*" lest, like the apostle Paul, when caught up into the third heavens, we should become unduly exalted by the lofty heights on which we have dwelt; lest, like Lucifer, son of the morning, enamored with his own beauty, we should become proudly intoxicated with the marvels of our blessing. The benediction of another "Mount of Beatitudes" is to be brought to us, "Blessed are the poor in spirit," and is to mingle with the "spiritual bless-

ings" of which we have so bounteously partaken, lest we "let them slip," lest they "flow by us." We are to walk through another "valley of humiliation" that we might cry fervently, with overrunning hearts, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thee, be all the glory."

Let us then descend into the valley. Let us listen to the message that there comes to us. It is "inspired."

You were "dead through trespasses and sins" (so good manuscript authority changes it); you were dead to God, dead to a life with God, dead to eternal blessings. You were swept along in a mill-race, a worldly course. No undertow that sucks the feeble swimmer to the depths more certainly drags him down, than you were being drawn to "destruction" (see Phil. 3:18), for you "minded earthly things." You were driven helpless before the ill, evil winds of the Prince of the Power of the Air, all-pervasive, inescapable, energizing you with the spirit of rebellion, yourself a "son of disobedience," "alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in you." You were an assiduous purveyor to your own "fleshly desires" and carnal "mind"; you were naturally a "child of wrath;" for "he that believeth not the Son, hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." You could not by any possible effort or combination of circumstances save yourself, you were still "without strength" after the long lapse of centuries of self-help; you were dead, dead by every test that might be applied to you.

"But GOD"—the God whose wrath "abides upon him," the God who is "so pure that He cannot look upon iniquity," the God, before whom the seraphim veil their faces, crying "Holy, holy, holy," the God whose holiness

found expression in "The Holy One who knew no sin," whose righteousness was as the driven snow—that God was and wrought, *because* He was "rich in mercy."

"The criminal sat crouched on his hard bench, chained hand and foot. He did not look up. He was a dreadful sight, his brutal face haggard, unshaven, his eyes blood-shot, his whole appearance almost like some low animal. Through the shadowy prison the Little Major crept to those chains, those symbols of the man's degradation" (he was the vilest kind of murderer); "and still the man did not look up. 'You must be in great trouble, brother. Can I help you any?' asked the Little Major, with a wonderful *Christlike* compassion in his voice."

"But GOD, *who is rich in mercy,*" wrought.

"If I might venture without seeming irreverent, I would point to that pathetic page in the Old Testament history where the king hears of the death, red-handed in treason, of his darling son, and careless of victory, and forgetful of everything, and oblivious that Absalom was a rebel, and only remembering that he was his boy, burst into that monotonous wail that has come down over all the centuries as the deepest expression of undying love, 'Oh, my son, Absalom, my son, my son, Absalom! Oh, Absalom, my son, my son!' We are all His Absaloms, and though we are dead in trespasses and sins, God, who is rich in mercy, bends over us and loves us with His great love."

"GOD, *for the great love wherewith He has loved us.*"

"The man lifted his bleared eyes under the shock of unkempt hair, and spoke, startled:

"'You call me brother. You know what I'm here for, and you call me brother? Why?'"

"The little Major's voice was steady and sweet as he replied without hesitation:

"'Because I know a great deal about the sufferings of Christ on the Cross, all because He loved you so. So why shouldn't I call you 'brother' '"?"

"GOD—even when we were dead in sins."

"Then the murderer suddenly looked up and exclaimed: 'It's true what you said. Christ has pardoned me. Now I can die like a man.'"\*

"*Hath quickened us together with Christ.*"

Yes, but God is not satisfied with half-way measures. Gather together the precious statements that throughout the New Testament associate us with Christ, that link us with Him in the triumphal procession of His love, that steal into our hearts like the sweet odors from swinging censers (2 Cor. 2: 14-17), that render us "heart-captives" of the "One who loved us," and we find the story gathering head around Calvary (we were "*crucified with Christ;*" we *died "with Christ"*) descending the solemn mount in mournful procession to the "rock-hewn" tomb (we were "*buried with Him*"), where it might seem as if all the hopes of the ages found sepulture, lingering there regretfully, until the "soul that might not be left in Hades" returned to its holy, incorruptible temple (we were "*quickened together with Christ*"), until the "mighty stone" was wrenched from its solid bases and the "Prisoner of Death" came forth in triumph (we were "*raised up together;*" we are "*risen with Christ*"), gathering treasure from the "sweet communings" with "His Own" during all those sacred days that clothed the wondrous tale with a shekinah cloud of glory "that fadeth not away," until, in seeming, He is "parted from them," though now we know that even in His very ascension we have ascended also into the highest heaven (we are "*seated together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*"), and

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\* From "*The War Romance of the Salvation Army.*"

we hear celestial choirs filling the heavenly temple with the music of:

“Come, let us sing the matchless worth,  
And sweetly sound the glories forth,  
Which in the Saviour shine.”

**“That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”**

The English of this passage weakens the force of the original a little. The phraseology gives the impression of a present quiescence of the ages, by and by to be transmuted into activity. The Greek really says “the *oncoming* ages.” The picture is one of present motion. We stand upon the shores of the ocean of time, and look across the intervening stretches to where a great wall of water, rising ever higher as it approaches, is heaving forward, irresistibly, majestically, inevitably, till the moment when it shall spread itself, widely sweeping, at our feet. It is not, indeed, that in time now being, there is *no* display of grace. It suffuses the entire scene. It permeates the atmosphere with a dim glory. But in those “oncoming ages,” when the King of Grace shall disclose Himself, the “wings of the morning” shall have brushed away all shadows of the night, and there shall be no let nor hindrance to perfect vision:

“Not a cloud above,  
Not a spot within.”

To put the thought a little differently—the last words John Bunyan’s old Mr. Honest shouted, in that immortal allegory, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, as the waters of Jordan surged about him, were “*Grace reigns.*” But his was the seer’s vision. It was Faith’s anticipation. Grace is, indeed, now enthroned in heaven (Heb. 4:16), but it has not yet entirely “reigned unto life eternal” (Rom. 5:21) on earth. Its reign is now a reign of “right,” but not altogether of “fact.” In the ages that “are coming on,” however, it shall be a reign both *de jure* and *de facto*, and thus shall find its richest display. Then truly shall come to pass that saying “Grace reigns,” and God’s kindness toward us in Christ Jesus shall be regally manifested. So it is no wonder that the “earnest expectation of the creature awaiteth the manifestation of the sons of God” (Rom. 8: 19), awaiteth and reacheth out to embrace to the uttermost the goodness of God. And throughout eternity, the Father of Eternity (Isa. 9: 6), He who not merely ushers in eternity, but *molds* and *shapes* it after His own image, until it becomes another “impress of Himself,” “The King of Grace,” for eternity shall exhibit His grace in the full riches of its richness to understanding hearts. And there and then, my brother, we shall understand and rejoice together. Oh, to have large hearts now that they may contain more then.

In the opening bars of a celebrated funeral march, that voices a strain of triumph throughout, the ear catches a short passage of Luther’s famous hymn, “A Strong Tower is our God.” The music flows on, and ever and again the passage from the old hymn repeats itself, keying the heart up to a plenitude of expectation.

Finally, in a moment, every note conforms to the theme, and in triumphant outpouring the music gathers to itself all the magnificent confidence of,

*“Ein’ feste Burg ist unser Gott.”*

Thus the gigantic figure of the Reformation hero seems to head the march and swell its triumph.

In the familiar words of the Ephesian passage now following, “By grace ye are saved, through faith,” the song of Salvation is bodied forth, and Paul, little Paul, the Apostle of Grace, so little and yet so great, stands forth in the place of Luther, and his iteration of “By grace are ye saved”\* is like the ever-recurring phrase from Luther’s hymn, a promise of the magnificent disclosure still to follow, so that our thoughts leap on in triumph, to the end.

This thought that we are saved, saved from everything evil, saved entirely and exclusively by grace, saved like Paul was, from madness to sanity, from hatred to love eternal, from ways of war to paths of peace, from the hell of our own making to the heaven of God’s making, is, where properly apprehended, pure and unalloyed bliss. Here is the “thinking” that is “life and peace.”

The grace is God’s. It must be His. The faith is ours. The grace awakens faith. As God’s goodness, “His kindness,” “leads us to repentance,” so His grace leads to faith. The more profoundly we realize God’s grace in saving us, the more confidently do we trust the “God of grace.” Grace is the Mother of Faith, and through Faith the “Mother of us all.” As for the natural child

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\* The word “grace” occurs one hundred times in Paul’s epistles.

there is no peace like Mother's arms, so for the believer, the child of God, there is no peace like that found in the arms of Grace, the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Salvation then is the "gift of God," it is the outpouring of His grace through the channel of the Cross. No profane hand must be outstretched to support this ark of rest. It is "not of works," our works. Within the bulwarks that it has thus raised as temple walls about us, breathing "sanctuary," boasting were a profanity. It is excluded. Unhallowed, sin-stained hands must lay no tool to the sacred structure that God in Christ has fashioned.

Nay, more. Not merely are we protected solely by God, but we ourselves, who are "saved by grace," are His workmanship. We are by no means "self-made men." We are God-made men, a work of creation. We are created unto good works. God has made us good, that we might make good, and the only way in which we, as Christians, may "make good," is that we should be consecrated to the effectuation and perpetuation of good in a world of evil. We are to be a "people for a possession, zealous of good works." We, in our measure, are to be like the picture of the Christ given us by Bickersteth in, "Yesterday, To-day and Forever."

"Full of the Spirit He came: His sinless powers  
 All quickened to the uttermost of man:  
 His faith transparent without clouds: His love  
 Clear radiance on the altar of His heart,  
 Fire without smoke of darkness: prophecies  
 Of everlasting joy kindling His soul,  
 Pure, perfect manhood."

God hath ordained beforehand that we should walk, live, in these works. Christ "hath given us an example

that we should follow in His steps." God hath sent His Son into this world to live a life like none ever lived before, that He might be our "exemplar." We are to be "imitators of God" in the Person of His Son, "as dear children." We are to "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice for a sweet-smelling savor to God."

The Past of Church history also calls to us; the noble lives of men who "suffered the loss of all things for Christ's sake" preach with an eloquence louder than the tongues of men or of angels.

"But time would fail  
To speak of all that trod in Stephen's steps,  
Who for their Master's sake endured the worst  
Of vengeance men could wreak on fellow-men,  
Shame, taunts, revilings, hunger, nakedness,  
Bonds, dungeons, scourges, tortures, till at last,  
They yielded up their bodies to be burned,  
Or bowed their neck to the devouring sword."

Such is the "mind that was in Christ Jesus;" such the noble pattern of living received by tradition from our spiritual fathers; such the high ideals that have been left us as sacred legacies by those "whose praise is in all the churches," such some of the "shining ways" marked out by the feet of leaders who have passed on to their "heavenly reward." When Napoleon stood by the Pyramids of Egypt, he cried to his soldiers, "Forty centuries look down upon you from these monuments." History, and better still, "His story" call to us. The Past of glorious heroism, the Present of splendid opportunity, the Future of high reward, are beckoning to *us*, calling *us* to unselfish living, loving service, devoted following. "We are created in Christ Jesus unto Good

WORKS, that God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.”

“I beseech you, brethren, that ye walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called.”

**“Wherefore, remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision in the flesh made with hands, that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world, but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”**

We are here confronted with international differences and distances, as well as differences and distances between God and man. In the one case there are barriers that are established, God-established, man-established, and in the other barriers raised by man alone.

Paul, with his rabbinical training, was acquainted not merely with the Old Testament Scriptures, but also with the teachings of the doctors of the law, and the conditions he describes are vivid realities to him. It may not be unprofitable for us to recall for a moment the enmity of the Jew for the Gentile, which like the “middle wall of partition” referred to later in the chapter, the “law of commandments contained in ordinances,” made difficult indeed any approximation on the Jew’s part to the “uncircumcised who knew not the law.” Edersheim’s “Life and Times of the Messiah” is our authority:

“In truth the bitter hatred which the Jew bore to the Gentile can only be explained from the estimate entertained of his character. The most vile and unnatural crimes were imputed to them. It was not safe to leave cattle in their charge, to allow their women to nurse infants, or their physicians to attend the sick, nor to walk in their company, without taking precautions against sudden and unprovoked attacks..They and theirs were defiled, their houses unclean as containing idols or things dedicated to them, their feasts, their very contact was polluted by idolatry; and there was no security if a heathen were left alone in a room that he might not in wantonness or by carelessness defile the wine or the meat on the table, or the oil and wheat in the store. Three days before a heathen festival (according to some also three days after) every business transaction with them was prohibited, for fear of either giving help or pleasure. Jews were prohibited to pass through a city where there was an idolatrous feast; nay, they were not even to sit down within the shadow of a tree dedicated to idol worship. Its wood was polluted; if used in baking, the bread was unclean....Jewish workmen were not to assist in building basilicas nor stadia, nor places where judicial sentences were pronounced by the heathen...Milk drawn by a heathen, if a Jew had not been present to watch it, bread and oil prepared by them, were unlawful. Their wine was wholly interdicted, the mere touch of a heathen polluted a whole cask; nay, even to put one’s nose to heathen wine was strictly prohibited.”

Such was a sample of that “zeal for God, but not according to knowledge,” to which the apostle, in another place, bears witness. The Gentiles were indeed “alienated from the commonwealth of Israel.”

They were, moreover, “strangers from the covenants of promise.” These covenants are well known to our readers. They established a very blessed and intimate connection for Israel with God. A profound sense of it is

evinced by Moses, when he writes: "For what nation is there so great, that hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" It was God Himself, moreover, who had said: "Now, therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then shall ye be a peculiar treasure unto Me, above all people, for all the earth is Mine: and ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation."

Israel, as we know, kept not the covenant, yet in spite of that fact, God assumed another relationship to them, of even closer intimacy. The prophet Jeremiah writes: "Their *Redeemer* is strong, the Lord of Hosts is His name." The word translated "Redeemer" is "Goel." The Goel of any Israelite was always *his next of kin*. He was the nearest blood-relation, and as such three main duties devolved upon him. One was to buy back, redeem, any property alienated by his relative, because of poverty or other urgent need. Another was to redeem that relative from slavery if he sold himself to a stranger; the third to avenge his blood, were he murdered or inadvertently slain. These were the duties of a Goel, a "next of kin," and *this* is the name that Jehovah permitted to be applied to Himself in the day of Israel's alienation. How very near then were they to God, positionally. Spiritually, alas, they were at a distance: "This people draweth nigh unto Me with their lips, and honoreth Me with their mouth, but their heart is far from Me."

The heathen, however, were entirely without God, atheists—as the word used might be transliterated. They

had gods of wood and stone, they were idolaters, but they had no conception of the true God. They were also without Christ, who had bridged the gulf that Israel had made between themselves and God. They knew of no "Mediator between God and men." Consequently they were entirely without legitimate hope of life beyond the grave. They were in that respect as the "beast that perisheth." Those who had lived in the city of Ephesus, and who in days gone by had joined in the foolish cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" knew perhaps better than Paul how great the hopelessness.

So the Apostle calls upon them to "remember" how far off they had been. It was something to humble them, and yet something over which they might rejoice. The gulf had been spanned, the distance had been abolished. Those "that were afar off had been made *nigh* by the blood of Christ." The very thing that expressed the utmost hatred of man, expressed the utmost love of God. The deed that seemingly would have forever sealed the awful distance between God and man was the means whereby that distance had been annihilated unto the ages of the ages. They were now "with Christ, with God, with hope."

The celebrated writer and clergyman, Charles Kingsley, once said, "I think I have one of the happiest homes in England, yet I could not live without Christ."

Doubtless he would have recognized that the chief source of that happiness was that same Christ. Many a Christian will say that times of communion with Him have been the most delightful that he has ever known, that sacred memories hallow the places in which he has walked and talked with the Lord. He sings:

“I see Thee not, I hear Thee not,  
Yet oft art Thou with me,  
And earth hath ne'er so dear a spot,  
As where Thou art with me.

“Like some bright dream that comes unsought  
When slumbers o'er me roll,  
Thy vision sometimes fills my heart  
And charms my ravished soul.”

And when he remembers that this communion is fruit of the blood of His cross, that the lintels and doorposts of the houses where he dwells are sprinkled with the “blood of the Lamb, that taketh away the sin of the world,” that he is a member of a “blood-brotherhood” through the atoning work of Him who once in triumph exclaimed: “Go, tell My *brethren* that I ascend unto My God and their God,” then his attitude is that of the adoring worshipper.

And whereas, as we have said, we “were without hope,” now that same Christ is Himself our hope. It is thus we wait for Him. Let us listen to Alexander Maclaren for a moment on this theme, he speaks so delightfully: “On these two great pillars, rising like columns on either side of the gulf of Time, ‘He has come,’ ‘He will come,’ the bridge is suspended by which we may safely pass over the foaming torrent that else would swallow us up. The revelation in the past cries out for the revelation in the future. The Cross demands the Throne. That He has come once, a Sacrifice for sin, stands incomplete, like some building left unfinished with rugged stones protruding which prophesy an addition at a future day, unless you can add, ‘Unto them that look for Him will He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.’ ”

**“For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; and that He might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.”**

A very capable colored preacher was asked to give the secret of his success as a speaker. He replied: “Well, I fust takes my tex’. Then I ’splains it, then I ’spounds it, and afterwards I adds de rousements.” W. E. Gladstone, when he heard the story, said that it contained the secret of success in the House of Commons.

There is, perhaps, somewhat greater reason for explaining and expounding the present passage than in other cases. Its theme is very similar to that which precedes it, and variety of treatment revivifies minds that easily tire. It is as good a work to collect the wood for the fire as to set it alight. And both wood and match are necessary, if we would be warmed.

“He, Himself, is our peace” is the central thought of our text. We have learned of Him through the work that He wrought and the truths that He taught. He once said: “I am absolutely what I am saying unto you.” He was equally absolutely what He was doing for them.

Word and work are the beautiful oils that blend to limn His portrait. From them His face shines forth. And as work and word bring peace, so His Person is "peace." It is peace living and personified. Were it possible for word and work to be obliterated, He would still abide the pledge and promise of their reduplication. "All the promises of God in Him are Yea." He is the very Prince of Peace, last step in the ladder of ascending glories of Isaiah's stirring prophecy (Isaiah 9), and if the ordinary "peacemaker" be called "child of God," then the Great Peacemaker may well be hailed "Only-Begotten of God." How transcendently magnificent is the peace He has wrought!

This peace is one 'twixt man and man, and 'twixt man and God. Its tides flood the Universe. A Chinese exclusion wall had frozen off all approximation of Jew to Gentile, of Gentile to Jew, as we saw in our last meditation. A greater than Chinese exclusion wall barred all men from God. Christ broke down that partition wall. He "took it out from the midst." He leveled the mountain ranges of the "Great Divide." The valleys were filled, the hills were brought low. The crooked was made straight and the rough way smooth, that all men might see the Salvation of our God. Jew and Gentile were free to fraternize, and over them both God might bend in love, Father of a united family.

Christ, also, in His flesh, abolished "the enmity," "*slew it.*" As the "fulfilling of the law" was love, so the breaking of the law was hatred, "enmity." To love's one's neighbor as oneself, to love God with all the soul, all the mind, all the strength—that is to keep the law. To hate one's neighbor, as Jew hated Gentile, and Gentile hated Jew, in a reciprocity of enmity, is breaking of the law.

“Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God,” is in beautiful contrast. It is in spirit law’s finest keeping. It is *love*. It is love to *God*. Christ’s reason for the Cross was, “That the world may know that I love the Father.” It is love to *man*. “Who loved me and gave Himself for me” is the specific instance of “love to man.”

“ ’Twas love, unbounded love, to us,  
Led Him to die and suffer thus.”

Thus as the “commandments contained in decrees,” *broken*, were “the enmity,” so the commandments in decrees, *kept*, as Christ kept them, even unto death, were *love, the love*. And the commandments kept swallowed the commandments broken, even as Moses’ rod swallowed the rods of the magicians.

Colossians 2, moreover, states that Christ took “the handwriting of ordinances” by which man was condemned before God, and nailed it “to His cross.” The *blood* of the Cross “blotted out” the handwriting, the love of the Cross blotted out “the enmity.” His love unto death annulled our death unto love.

And so the imagery glows into warmer intimacy. Jew and Gentile are not merged in a confederacy, nor consolidated into national unity, but a “new man” appears, Christ Himself the Head, and all can sing:

“O Son of God, whose love so free,  
For men did make Thee Man to be,  
United to our God in Thee,  
Are we made one.

“And when this world shall pass away,  
May we awake with joy and say,  
Now in the bliss of endless day,  
We all are one.”

The Apostle then emphasizes the Godward aspect of the work, as he had been stressing the manward. The word "reconciled" with its lovely connotation, glides into the context, and suggests "Pacifactor" as well as *Pax*. Reconciliation is an inward work. The peace that Christ has made "captivates" the heart, then "garrisons" it. Hatred for God is superseded by love. Understanding of God supplants misunderstanding. Evil passions with their strident call to strife are hushed by the inbreathings of God's gentle Spirit.

"Every tiger madness muzzled,  
Every serpent passion killed."

Reconciliation also means the introduction of the first-fruits of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace." The heavens are now ever tranquil, no matter how the sea toss, or the flood "lift up its voice," for over him "who sitteth o'er the waterflood" both sea and flood once beat, in utmost rage, on Calvary. Who then may henceforth be angry with a God who permits the storm, if upon that God have broken all its pent-up strength and fury! Yes, when we were yet "enemies," we were conciliated, appeased, "reconciled." The peace "ever flowing from God's thoughts of His own Son" has ushered in the calm, in which we, as once the disciples on the tranquillized lake, shall reach the other shore.

But our text, seemingly loath to leave so blessed a subject, now apparently retrogrades. "He came and preached peace to you that were afar off and peace to them that were nigh." As a matter of fact, however, we know that our Lord did not Himself, personally, evangelize the nations. Is the order then actually distorted? Is the statement really a perversion? Perish the thought.

The reply to the first question is that logic may have a place, but logic may not always control language. A preacher, once criticized for wandering from his text, was defended by, "True, he does wander from his text, but always right into your heart." The "freezing reason's colder part" may have its crystal beauty, but the living beauty of the rose transcends it, and both logic and psychology play their rôle in Scripture. We have seen Christ as our "peace," and now we see that "Peace" preaching peace, the message and the messenger blending themselves in a quickening sermon.

"Peace, bring us peace," was often the substance of the anguished cry of the natives of Africa, as David Livingstone moved among them. "And beautiful upon its plains" were the feet of that messenger of God as he brought the glad evangel of Christ to them. "Wherever you run across the footsteps of David Livingstone in Africa," writes Henry Drummond, "there lingers the fragrance of his memory." But that memory was sweet with the Christ-life and the Christ-message. And so we find the answer to our second question. Christ came to all *the world* when He came from God to Judea. The message of God's reign of love in Christ was too mighty, too important, to be cooped up within the narrow confines of any single country, any single empire. "*L'Empire, c'est la paix,*" boasted Napoleon the Third, but his empire suffered cataclysmic overthrow in the bloody strife around Sedan. "God is love" was the assurance of the first great Evangelist, and Christ's "empire" of love is peace indeed down all the ages. They that were afar off heard the message, and they "that were nigh." And still its sound goes forth:

“If thou wouldst trust, poor soul,  
In Him who rules the whole,  
Thou wouldst find peace and rest,  
Wisdom and sight are well, but Trust is best.”

The closing words of our text: “For through Him we both have access unto the Father,” suggest the power behind the message, the Blessed Spirit of our God, and another secret of our peace. However blocked and choked our lines of communication in the world, the “line is never busy” that communicates with heaven. “With all prayer and supplication,” then, “with thanksgiving,” let us approach the Father, for “truly our fellowship is with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.”

May that same blessed Spirit add the “rousements” for rousing, and yet calming, soothing too, is the theme upon which we have lingered so long.

**“So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, (R.V.), but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Corner Stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit” (Eph. 2: 19-22).**

Words are said to be signs for ideas, but if we would behold them in a more fascinating rôle, we must transmute them into pictures. As signs they are but stiff finger-posts, pointing the way along the pathways of

thought, but as pictures they blazen the thought before the mind, in such a way that it takes up its bed and walks. It joins the peripatetics. The word becomes all alive, and quickens the mind with its picturesque perspicuity.

Ellicott thinks that the expression "stranger" may be paired off with the word "fellow-citizens," while "sojourner" may find a mate in "householder," in a sort of double wedding of opposites, a union not entirely unblest with happiness.

The "*stranger*" suggests the immigrant, landing on the Battery, in New York City, poor, hesitant, forlorn, desolate, the future misted with uncertainty, the present pregnant with ponderous perplexity. In the "*fellow-citizen*" the "stranger" is transformed and transfigured; he is surrounded with compatriots, and threads his way with no uncertain steps amid the maze of our busy marts, "one of us." The country *belongs* to him. Again, the "*sojourner*" is the homeless wanderer, here to-day, away on the morrow, the habitant of a wayside inn or chance hostelry, his acquaintances friendly solely for what they may get out of him, one seen, as the Afghans are said to regard the stranger, as a "bird of gold to be plucked to the last feather." One of "the *household*," on the contrary, is bound up in the life of a home-circle, and if, as the word suggests, "domestic," yet "domiciled" with a loving master, and revelling in the word "our," like the trusty servant of an old English lord, whom Charles Spurgeon sketches: "They were down in the country, and there was a wagon standing at the door of the country-seat, and his lordship said, 'John, whose wagon is that?' 'Oh,' says he, 'that is ours, my lord; it has brought some of our goods down from the town.' In

a minute or two the lord said: 'John, what coach is that coming up the drive?' 'Well, my lord,' he says; 'don't you know that's our carriage?' 'But,' he said, 'I see some children in it; are they *our* children, John?' 'Oh, yes, my lord!' he says; 'Bless their hearts! They are our children; and I am going downstairs to bring them in.'" John was a household-er in the homely sense of our text.

But how pitiable an object is the man "without a country" and without a home! Yet when the man without a country and without a home finds both country and home, he, above all others, knows in practical experience the true meaning of the word "blessedness." And if that be true of worldly relationships, doubly and trebly is it true of the heavenly relationships. Paul must have gloried in his Roman citizenship on the steps of the castle in Jerusalem, when, right on top of his maltreatment at the hands of the mob, the soldiers themselves were about to scourge him. His claim to it had been like some magic incantation, and the cruel thongs fell from him and the scourging was at once taboo. I warrant me, however, that in the *Roman* prison he gloried still more when, with Roman bonds upon him, he wrote his beloved Philippian household-ers, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our bodies of humiliation, and fashion them like unto His own body of glory, according to the working of that mighty power, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself." Such citizenship meant escape from greater evil than any implied in mob violence and illegal scourging in Jerusalem, the "city of dreadful night." And if Paul thought of his birth in Tarsus, "no mean city," with justifiable pride, with what joy abounding must he have looked on

to the heavenly fatherland and "the city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He had all those Christian virtues that Peter tabulates as requisites for keen-sightedness, and therefore he could "see afar off."

The expression "of the household of God," or "householders of God," as it is literally, bespeaks our home in the assembly here below, however, as well as membership in the "many mansions."

How lovely is membership in the Assembly of Christ! What a home the "Church of the living God" makes Christ's own, in the world. Within its doors we are with Christ; and with Christ, we are with God; and to be with Christ and with God, in fully appreciated fellowship, is just the very happiest lot on earth, as it is the chief joy of heaven. And should not the retrospect, *Now* a citizen, but *once* a stranger; *now* of the "household of God," but *once* a sojourner, sprinkle oil on its kindled fires? The metrical version of an ancient psalm, portraying the joy of the captives returned from Babylon, is jogging precious memories, even as I write, and our joy should be as much greater than that of the captives as our deliverance has been the more magnificent and profound. "*Now*" and "*once*," "*now*" and "*once*," is a precious antiphonal chant:

"When from bands, her sons redeeming,  
 God to Zion led the way,  
 We were like to people dreaming,  
 Thoughts of bliss too bright to stay.

"Filled with laughter stood we gazing,  
 Loud our tongues with rapture sang,  
 Quickly with the news amazing,  
 All the startled nations rang.

“See Jehovah’s grace and glory,  
Mark what love for them He had,  
‘Yea, for us!’ Go, tell the story!  
This He’s done, and we are glad.”

A lovely little verse in the 68th psalm, another “redemption song,” “*He setteth the solitary in families,*” nestles softly between the words, “A Father of the fatherless, and an Advocate of the widows, is Jehovah in His holy habitation,” and, “He bringeth out those who are bound with chains.” The text seems to me just *made* for a superscription to our Ephesian theme, an illuminating epitome of its content. If we only actually loved one another as “Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us,” how much more would our Christian assemblies mean to us than they do. What delightful homes they would become! What quiet refuges from the moil and toil of life! Then they would be to us indeed refuges like that of which Alexander Maclaren speaks: “While the storm hurtles its loudest on the outermost coasts of our being. . . an island set in some stormy sea, with wild waves breaking against its coast, and the wind howling around it, but in the centre a deep and shady dell, that heareth not the loud winds when they call, where not a leaf is moved by the tempest.” Let it then be one of our highest ambitions in life to make them even such.

We now come to the second division of our text: “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.” The very sudden change in the metaphor here is at first rather disturbing. The train of thought takes the switch at full speed, and we are momentarily rather shaken out of our equanimity by the shift. But does not the very swiftness of the change predicate the eager reciprocity of love?

Because God built *David* a house of cedar, *David* most naturally and loyally wished to raise to God a house of prayer and praise. But, in our text, God is represented as having dowered *us* with both country and home, and should *we* not be more keenly eager to build for Him a holy temple? This house is, of course, the work of God's blessed Spirit. That is true. But shall there not be on our part a spirit of gratitude, that outpours itself in an abounding joy in this work of the Spirit?

This responsiveness on our part, this glad acquiescence in the work of the Spirit, is specified in Hebrews 3 as essential to God dwelling among us, for it says, "*If we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.*" The Old Testament states that God dwells amid the praises of His people, while Peter reaffirms the thought in, "Ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, *for* a holy priesthood." It is because God is among us that we praise, and He is among us *because* we praise. Is it not an altogether astounding and wonderful thing that God delights thus in us?—that He "rejoices over us with singing," that He is "silent in His love?"—that He has found in us a home? It seems almost too wonderful to believe. It would be the faith of a madman, were it not that we are "built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." That is the alone sufficient basis of everything. It is a foundation, blessed be God, that is of Himself and "standeth sure." To adapt the words of an Old Testament prophecy: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a *precious* cornerstone, a sure foundation. He that believeth shall not be put to shame."

The apostles and prophets in the New Testament era, at least, were of such a type, however, that in no wise could they have been *this* foundation. "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth," said Jesus Himself, "because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto *babes*." A kingdom "built upon babes" could have never stood. Yet has nothing devised of the earth's wisest begun to rival this work of babes. For in those babes God's Spirit wrought, "and the gates of Hades shall not prevail" against the work. It is "growing unto a holy temple in the Lord!" And He,

"Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,  
And the round ocean, and the blue sky, and the living  
air,"

is still in His holy temple. In Christ "we are builded together for a habitation of God, through the Spirit."

"Oh, where are kings and empires now,  
Of old that went and came?  
But, Lord, Thy Church is praying yet,  
A thousand years the same.

"We mark her goodly battlements,  
And her foundations strong,  
We hear within the solemn voice  
Of her unending song.

"For not like kingdoms of the world,  
Thy holy church, O God;  
Though earthquake shocks are threatening her,  
And tempests are abroad;—

"Unshaken as eternal hills,  
Immovable she stands,  
A mountain that shall fill the earth,  
A house not made by hands."

### CHAPTER THREE

**“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God” (Ephes. 3: 14-19).**

The above quotation connects with verse 1 of the third chapter and the closing verses of the second chapter. Verses 2-13 are a parenthesis in the argument, “The Ministry of the Mystery,” and are epitomized by Lange: “Ver. 2; The apostolic Office is a gift of grace. Vers. 3 and 4, The method of communication. Ver. 5, The period and persons concerned in the communication. Ver. 6, The purport of the mystery. Vers. 7-13, The ministry and unworthiness of the recipient.” Let us, however, each one for himself, carefully analyze this important passage, that our hearts may be the more completely attuned to the lovely solemnity of the Apostle’s second epistolary prayer. When the spirit is prayerful the atmosphere is worshipful, and it is only as worshipers that we may

thread our way amid the sacred arcana of God's great heart of love.

The temple of the second chapter is the dwelling of a God who "is love," and the love of Christ is the sweetest incense in its worship. The prayer may thus be regarded as fulfilling a similar office to that of the 13th of 1st Corinthians in the activities of the Assembly. If we treat it in that way, it is with the understanding that that is far from being its sole purport. Such treatment however, will, we trust, be fresher because of the different viewpoint.

The Apostle is seen falling on his knees, sensible of his own and the Ephesians' incompetence and God's greatness; the immeasurability of a measureless deep stretches before him; the finite spirit expands before the infinite with intensest longing that all the fulness of God may flood it. Who of us is not possessed with a similar longing? May our ardent prayers keep company with Paul's for the Ephesians, that even in this day of sad declension a refreshing revelation of Christ may fill heart and mind to overflowing. Here is the most potent antidote to the poisonous atmosphere that threatens to asphyxiate us. Here is the only resource that will afford us a "garment of praise," when the spirit is heavy with long discouragement.

Can we learn a lesson from the words of old Ma-moteke, of whom "Coillard of the Zambesi" speaks? She was an old woman who first prayed to God when she heard that He would understand *her* language. She poured out her heart in Zulu. From that day "she advanced in Christian life by leaps and bounds. From being stupid she became remarkably intelligent, she seemed to renew

her youth like the eagle's." She died in 1876. "During her illness she saw a little grandchild, about eleven years old, was weeping about her soul. The old woman turned round and said, 'What do my ears hear? that you are longing after the Lord Jesus? It is the sweetest word I have heard—*Long for Jesus all your life!*' "

The sole exhortation in the Bible to kneel before God is found in the 95th Psalm. It opens with the exhortation to, "Sing unto the Lord." Then the sixth verse breaks forth: "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us *kneel* before the Lord, our Maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His pasture, and the sheep of His hand." Then the words, "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts," clang out, like bell upon a reef, a solemn warning. Obvious indeed is its necessity. God feeds us, God guides us, yet the whole temple may be wrecked if the spirit of prayer and praise, the moving power of its worship, grows inarticulate and dies away.

The third chapter of Hebrews injects this "hard-heartedness" into a similar though slightly different context. Christ is there presented in all His faithfulness as Priest over the house of God, a tabernacle and temple where God is worshiped in the "rejoicing of hope." That rejoicing is one of the very foundations of the house, as we noticed in our last meditation. Hardness of heart alone may destroy it. Singing and kneeling are the response to Christ's faithful care in High-priestly character, as they are, in the psalm, to that of the Shepherd.

Now in the third of Ephesians the context is similar to that of Hebrews 3 and Psalm 95. The Holy Temple, the "habitation of God through the Spirit," rises glorious and

stately in the second chapter. The parenthesis of the third chapter displays God's shepherd care reaching out to us Gentiles, through the instrumentality of Paul, a noble sub-shepherd and apostle. "The unsearchable riches of Christ," like pastures of tender grass, spread themselves out, till, on the far horizon, they blend in the heavenly blue of "God's eternal purpose." Immediately following, the sub-shepherd is seen upon his knees that the love of Christ, the surest remedy for hard-heartedness, might increasingly be revealed to us. The temple must be filled with the smoke of its incense. If *we* are not to "leave our first love" (Rev. 2: 4) then Christ's love must ever keep ours burning.

In a small Catholic chapel, there is, near the door, a crimson-colored heart, filled with oil, wherein floats a lighted wick, at which the worshipers kindle the little tapers in their hands as they kneel at the inner shrines. The chapel is known, because of this heart, as The Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We deprecate such ceremonial, but let us give heed to its obvious lesson.

God is addressed as "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom every family in heaven and earth is named." Here recurs a note from the second chapter, as to "the household of God." I understand a great lack of the "family feeling" prevails in some of the large gatherings of professing Christians of the day. Scarcely acquainted with one another, the members greet each other distantly, or not at all. Surely this must be a great damper on the worship and praise. Paul in his prayer manifests a sense of such a need in us all. This feeling may be one of the reasons for the phrase, "of whom every family in heaven and earth is named," not only linking

every several family with the others through their common origin, but heaven with earth also. The temple of old was to our Lord still "the *Father's* house" (John 2:16). The thought of "the Father gave the Son" permeates the praises of this other temple. It is the great aisle that leads to the altar of incense. Well may the vast throng sing, in ever increasing wonder:

"What was it, blessed God,  
Led Thee to give Thy Son?"

The next clause in the prayer is that we may be "strengthened with all might" by the Spirit "in the inner man." The blessed Spirit of God is the power for the enlightenment that leads to true worship. He "takes of the things of Christ and shows them" to us. Read 1 Corinthians 13, 14, and note how the Spirit should control all worship and service in the Church. He taps for us every vein of golden ore in God's unfathomable mines of truth. Those that are led by Him are "the sons of God" (Rom. 8: 14), and in them is title to this wealth. It is therefore very much in accord with the Apostle's teaching elsewhere, that he should make his first petition for the Spirit's power. To officiate in God's holy temple apart from the Spirit is to render spiritless its worship. We are not the priests of a ritual nor the puppets of ceremonial procedure. We are not to fill the sacred silences of God's house with the murmur of untaught words. The "*Selahs*" of the Psalms are preludes of further praise. The instruments of music wake to life again all the more sweetly for the "rests." In the presence of God "who is in heaven" the words of those "on earth" should be few. In these sacred silences of the sanctuary the peace

of heaven settles down upon the heart, as once the blessed Spirit, with dove's wings, upon the Christ. Then indeed we await the heavenly voice, "This is My beloved Son," and every cranny of our being grows warm at the "In whom I am well pleased." Such is indeed the Spirit's power to permeate the "inner man." Does not God Himself keep "silent in His love?"

The thought of our need of the Spirit, moreover, is emphasized in the expression, "with might." The act of worship is a wonderful act. Spiritual *might*, and nothing less, is requisite for true worship. Spiritual might, and nothing less, is necessary for the dwelling of Christ within the heart through faith, for there are a thousand things without and within us that might hinder this indwelling. Spiritual food is the fuel that keeps the fires of spiritual life burning. Thoughts of His love, of His power, of His wisdom, of His purity, should ever be awakening adoration within the temple. Christ is "glorified" by the presentation of these through the Spirit. We sing,

"We praise, we worship, we adore,  
As round Thyself we meet,"

but we may doubt our "gathering to Him" when our minds are not occupied other than perfunctorily with Him.

This, I take it, is the force of "Christ's dwelling in the heart" by faith. It is feeding upon Christ. "Faith" is the doorkeeper of our hearts. It is, without raising theological questions, our contribution to the Spirit's work. When you get into Love's company, you may be sure that Faith has prepared the way. It is Faith that first links us with the divine Saviour. It flings wide

the "Beautiful Gate" into God's temple. It clears away the mists from our spiritual eyes that we may behold the Lord "high and lifted up" (Isa. 6: 1). It heartens the spirit to cry, "Here am I, *send* me," as we leave the sanctuary.

"Rooted and grounded in love" applies both to individual and assembly. Tradition says that the Apostle John, carried into the Ephesian assembly in a dying condition, poured out a last exhortation: "Little children, love one another." True, or untrue, it was just like John, and the Ephesians needed it. Such love comes from Christ dwelling in the heart by faith. His love to us and our love to Him and one another are the subsoil of all spiritual growth. They also become a measuring rod, whereby we strive to "comprehend what is the length and breadth and depth and height," infinite task for infinities of time, deep calling unto deep in a ceaseless interplay of feeling. To make an *apropos* quotation: "So in all the play and counterplay of love between Christ and us, and in all the reaction of knowledge and love, this remains true, that we must be rooted and grounded in love ere we can know love, and must have Christ dwelling in our hearts, in order to that deep and living possession, which, when it is conscious of itself, is knowledge, and is forever alien to the loveless heart. If you want to know the blessedness of the love of Christ, love Him, and open your hearts for the entrance of His love to you. Love is the parent of deep true knowledge."

Commentators tell us that the "comprehend" of our text is more intellectual, the "know" that follows, more experimental. Intellect invested in experiment is the basis of true Science. So the two coalescing, "all saints" join

in experiment far more entrancing than any known to Physical Science. The "universal Church" engages in an exploration vastly more extensive than astronomers searching the pathless fields of the heavens. The great Congregation unites in an emprise in which supernatural powers alone are competent and still may fail. "The love of Christ surpasseth knowledge." Who can know it? Yet in stretching out to know will all our being be flooded with the inflowing tides of God's great fulness.



# Metrical Meditations on the Letter of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

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## *Chapter One*

I, Paul, an apostle, a sent one of God,  
Belonging to Jesus, both Saviour and Lord,  
Called forth by His will, and ready to die  
And live for the cause of my Master on High,  
Address you Ephesians, in His blessed Name,  
His saints and His faithful, through glory and shame,  
And pray that the grace of our Almighty God  
And peace that descendeth from Jesus the Lord,  
Be with you and keep you and shelter always,  
Until the bright morning break over our way,

Blessed be the God of Jesus Christ our Lord,  
Blessed be the Father, evermore adored,  
Blessed be the Blesser, blessed be His Name,  
He Himself hath blessed us, saved us from our shame,  
Ransomed us and freed us, called us up above;  
Chosen us in Jesus, Object of His love,  
Long before foundation of the rolling world,  
Banner of His purpose had He then unfurled;  
He would have us holy, spotless, undefiled,  
Stainless in His Presence, blameless as a child.

Predestined to join His own family on high,  
Adopted as sons and in Jesus made nigh,

And this the good pleasure of His sacred will,  
The praise of the glory of grace that doth fill  
The heavens above with the sweetest of praise,  
And hearts of His own, to the end of all days;  
As He was beloved so beloved are we,  
Accepted in Him who died on the tree,  
Redemption made ours through the blood that was shed,  
Forgiveness of sins through the Victim, who bled.

Purposes of wisdom, foresight all divine,  
Glimpses of His glory through the mystery shine,  
Told out to His children in His matchless love,  
Ever overflowing from the fount above.  
Fix your earnest vision on the years to come;  
Vistas all elysian of the Blessed One  
He is now disclosing to the raptured eye,  
Sweeping through the heavens, lifted up on high.  
Oh, the glorious prospect! Let it fill our soul,  
Like a mighty ocean, ever round us roll!

In the dispensation of that glorious time,  
When the bells of heaven, with their sweetest chime,  
Ring in all the fulness of the plans of God,  
He will be exalted, Christ the risen Lord,  
Head of all Creation and its grandest theme—  
Thought beyond expression, dream beyond all dream!  
Earth and heaven telling wonders of His praise,  
Saint and angel dwelling on His glorious ways,  
Swell the mighty chorus thundering 'neath the dome  
Of th' eternal mansions, round th' eternal throne.

And you hath He chosen a portion for Him,  
Amid all the glories that earth-glories dim,  
Ordained you according to His mighty will  
Who all things doth fashion His plans to fulfil,  
Who worketh His purpose, who shapeth His way,  
Till darkness of night giveth place to the day;

When we who have hoped in the blest Christ of God,  
Who in His blest footsteps have patiently trod,  
Shall be to the praise of that glory so fair  
With which nought in heaven or earth can compare.

The message that came through the truth of His Word,  
(O sweetest salvation that ever was heard!)  
Brought trust to your hearts and joy to the soul;  
The heads that hung down were raised to the goal  
To which His blest Spirit is leading you on,  
Himself the sure earnest of glory to come,  
When all those fair mansions He purchased in grace,  
Redeemed to Himself, and illumed with His Face,  
Shall open their portals to welcome you Home,  
The praise of His glory through ages to come.

I, Paul, who have heard of your faith in the Son,  
And love which ye have to the saints whom He won,  
Give thanks to the Father, whenever I pray,  
Beseeching that He who is Guide of our way,  
Would give you the spirit of wisdom and love,  
True knowledge of Him who dwelleth above;  
Your eyes thus enlightened and shining with hope  
Might fathom the riches, in all their vast scope,  
Awaiting the saint, who His glory shall be  
When morning breaks over Eternity's sea.

I long that He give you, in goodness, to know  
His power all surpassing to usward below,  
The power that prevailed in the raising of Christ  
When word and fulfilment together kept tryst,  
As forth from the grave our Redeemer arose  
And triumphed in might o'er the last of our foes,  
Ascending in majesty up through the sky  
To Deity's throne in the heavens on high,  
Above principality, power, and might,  
And clothed in His vestures of glory and light.

No name can compare with the name that He bears,  
Nor crown with the crown that in heaven He wears,  
The Victor, beneath Him and under His feet  
Are all things, and all things in Him are complete.  
He's Head to the Church that He bought with His life,  
In wonderful love will He make her His wife,  
The fulness of Him who outfillesh the All,  
His Body, His Bride, who, delivered from thrall,  
Shall share in the All that His love will impart,  
Whom Calvary's pains have won to His heart.

*Chapter Two.*

Dead in trespass, dead in sin,  
Once ye wandered far from Him,  
Worldly paths ye followed on  
Till your last dim hope had gone;  
Swallowed up in depths of gloom,  
Impotent within the tomb,  
Satan, Prince of all the air,  
Breathing in your heart despair,  
Made you madly disobey,  
Rebels in your wilful way.

Such were we, in times now past,  
With you then our lot was cast,  
Lust controlled our ev'ry way,  
Filled the heart and mind each day,  
Passions surging like the sea,  
Turgid wrath and enmity,  
Casting up their mire and dirt  
To our nature's lasting hurt,  
Made us children of the tomb,  
Wrath our everlasting doom.

God in His rich mercy then  
Stooped to save the sons of men,  
Breathed in them the breath of life,  
Loosed the bands of sin and strife,  
Raised us from a living death,  
Quickened us with life and health,  
Joined us with His only Son  
In the triumph He had won,  
Seated us with Him above,  
Such His all-surpassing love.

Grace would have us ever there  
In the mansions bright and fair,  
Where to His eternal praise  
We shall pass eternal days:  
Trophies of His glorious Son  
And the princely vict'ry won,  
Saved by faith, through grace alone,  
Gift of God to all His own.  
Praising 'mid the heav'nly host,  
Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

Our works had never saved us,  
Nor raised us from the tomb,  
His workmanship, *He* made us  
And saved us from our doom,  
Created us to serve Him  
And be to His own praise,  
Good works a lasting witness  
Ordained for all our ways—  
Good works in which we ne'er can boast:  
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost!

Remember, ye Gentiles, uncircumcised men,  
And aliens from Israel, and strangers, e'en then  
Ye wandered all hopeless, afar from your God,  
No promise illumined the paths that ye trod,  
Your spirits enwrapped in a shroud of despair,  
Naught knowing of Christ, of His love unaware,  
Afar on the mountains of sorrow and sin,  
All darkness around and darkness within,  
Until the Great Shepherd had passed through the flood,  
And brought you a pardon He'd sealed with His blood.

Ah, He is our peace! He hath made us both one,  
And joined us together, God's well-beloved Son,  
Removing partitions that straddled the way,  
And laws that to hatred forever gave sway;

So Gentile and Jew in a living accord  
Unite in adoring their ever-blest Lord,  
Who wooed them to God from the depths of their hate  
By sharing their woes and assuming their fate,  
And came and preached peace through the wonderful cross,  
Redeeming and saving the helpless and lost.

Nigh unto the Father through the blesséd Son,  
Access through the Spirit He for each hath won,  
Naught to keep us from Him, let us ever go  
Into His blest Presence, since the Christ we know.  
Foreigners no longer, citizens are we  
Of the blessed country of the good and free,  
Members of the Household of the mighty God!  
Surely this a comfort, as the road we plod,  
Singing through the Spirit on the heavenly way,  
Faces all illumined with the coming day.

Or—to change the image—temple we may be,  
Dwelling of the Father to eternity,  
Built on rock foundation, rising o'er the flood,  
Sanctified forever by the precious blood;  
Christ, the blessed Corner, Stone all true and tried,  
Trust of priest and prophet, in the One who died;  
Builded so compactly, naught shall tear it down,  
Place for God to dwell in, of His work the crown.  
See the incense rising from its altars fair,  
Christ its sweetest odor filleth all the air!

*Chapter Three*

O ye Gentiles, hear the story  
I, His prisoner, have to tell!  
Revelation of the glory!  
Jesus hath done all things well!  
Hidden once in other ages,  
Now to me, a saint, made known  
Not to great men or to sages,  
Grace would make you all His own,  
Heirs of God and joint-partakers  
Of the promise through the Christ,  
Fabric with no earthly makers,  
Truth and mercy here keep tryst.

I the least of all the holy,  
Grace is given unto me,  
Preacher, for the Gentiles solely,  
Of the Man of Calvary.  
Now to tell the sweetest message  
Ever by a mortal heard,  
Riches of the Christ that presage  
Glories of the Living Word;  
While the Church to heavenly legions  
Shows the wisdom manifold  
Of our God in those fair regions,  
Where His purpose He'll unfold.

Thus I bow to the great Father,  
Named of whom is ev'ry race,  
Asking that He grant you farther  
Deeper glories still to trace,  
Breadth that knows no earthly measure,  
Length that angels cannot scan,  
Depths and heights of the vast treasure  
Found in Jesus' Love to man.

*Chapter Four*

I, the Pris'ner of my Master, beg you, O my brethren dear,  
Walk ye worthy of the calling wherewith He hath called  
    you near,  
Let the graces of your Saviour, meekness, lowliness, and  
    love,  
Mark out all your earthly pathway, till ye reach the land  
    above;  
All forbearance, all longsuffering, never giving place to  
    wrath,  
Unity of Spirit keeping, in the bond of peace that hath  
Every hope of richest blessing from the One who, yearn-  
    ing, prayed,  
"Keep them one, O blessed Father, one in Us forever  
    made."

Only one great Body is there, indivisible e'er more,  
One great Spirit, giving access to the One whom they  
    adore,  
One high calling to the mansions where each one shall find  
    a place,  
One great Lord whom all are serving till they see Him  
    face to face,  
One great faith that binds each member to the One who's  
    gone on high,  
One baptismal water symbol and a penitential cry,  
One blest Father, whom adoring, prostrate all the ran-  
    somed fall,  
God forever, blest and mighty, over, round and in them all.

He hath ascended all heavens above,  
Captivity led in the chains of His might,  
And lavished His gifts in tenderest love  
On those who were once but children of night.

Apostles, ye know them, the salt of the earth,  
Who laid the foundation in years of our dearth,  
And prophets who future bright glories unfold  
And draw from the treasure-house things new and old.  
Evangelists too are proclaiming the grace  
Of God to a lost and a perishing race,  
While pastors the flock of the great Shepherd feed,  
And teachers instruct in the wonderful creed.

And all this hath purpose, He'd perfect His own  
For heaven's blest ministry, rich from the throne,  
And build up the Body on truth tried and sure,  
A unit in faith and fore'er to endure  
Whatever the storms that rage wild on the deep,  
Whatever the winds of bad doctrine that sweep,  
His knowledge an anchor and rest for the soul  
As error's dark waves like the sea-billows roll,  
A food that sustains and strengthens the heart,  
A builder of men who can manly take part,  
Nor shirk the great work, as together they stand  
Each forming a part of the sanctified band  
That nourished and strengthened forever doth grow,  
Performing the work of His Body below.

Other Gentiles now are walking swayed by vanity of mind,  
All their understanding darkened, groping through the  
    mists as blind,  
Ignorant, and therefore strangers from the life of God the  
    Light,  
Shrouds of darkness ever swathing hearts within the depths  
    of night;  
Feeling gone and passion regnant, filth and greediness  
    prevail,  
Fenny bogs of thought putrescent, wild carousal and  
    wassail.  
So I testify, my brethren, walk not in these paths of  
    shame;  
Ye are sanctified by Jesus, glorify His holy Name.

Ye have heard the crystal fountain pouring forth its limpid  
 stream,  
 Ye have caught the words of Jesus, purer than a heavenly  
 dream,  
 Ye have learned the truth He lived once, pearls of beauty  
 shrined in life;  
 Ye have thus put off the old man, full of sin and lust and  
 strife,  
 Now renewed within the spirit, God's creation pure and  
 bright,  
 Righteousness and pureness clothe you as in garments of  
 the light.  
 So ye now put on the new man, imitators of the Lord,  
 Rendering praise on earthly pathway to the One alone  
 adored.

Lying is not comely for the sons of God,  
 Put away all lying, as the road ye plod;  
 Should ye e'er be angry, let no wrath have place  
 After evening sundown, children ye of grace!  
 Yield not to the Devil; steal ye nevermore,  
 Work ye rather ever, not for earthly store,  
 But with richest bounty ye may have to give  
 To the poor and needy, while on earth ye live.  
 Speak ye only good words, that the one who hears  
 May thereby be built up, with strength for coming years.  
 Grieve not that blest Spirit, who is God's own seal,  
 Till the morning glories Christ the Lord reveal.  
 Bitterness and envy, anger put away,  
 Drive out every malice, kindness should have sway;  
 He hath once forgiven, so must ye forgive,  
 Showing how the Master here would have you live.

*Chapter Five*

As children in the image of earthly parents grow,  
 So let your present pathway reveal His ways below,  
 All lighted with His mercy and radiant with His love,  
 Until its earthly glory be merged in that above.  
 The Christ Himself hath loved us, His precious life. He  
     gave,  
 An offering of sweet savor, the dying soul to save;  
 And God rejoices in it, its incense rises still  
 From off the golden censers of all that do His will.

Away, away, uncleanness, from ev'ry fire-touched lip!  
 No mention of such foulness from saintly mouths should  
     slip.  
 Away, away, all jesting, all folly, and all pride!  
 They do not suit the saintly, nor grace the sanctified!  
 None covetous, nor unclean, idolater, nor proud,  
 Shall dare approach that Presence where ev'ry head is  
     bowed;  
 No fornicator can have share in th' kingdom of the blest,  
 Where ev'ry saintly pilgrim shall find a holy rest.

Be not partakers with them who work such hateful things,  
 Forever to their garments corrupting odor clings,  
 Defilement is their presence, and darkness is their shroud,  
 The wrath of God shall blast them from out the judgment  
     cloud.  
 Ah, ye were sometimes darkness, but now in Christ the  
     Lord  
 Effulgent floods of glory are ever round you poured;  
 As children of the light, then, walk onward through the  
     day,  
 And prove the wondrous goodness of His accepted way.

Unhealthy is the fungus that grows in shades of night,  
 And darkness is unfruitful—alone in life is light—  
 And light by its own goodness rebukes the deeds of those  
 Who seek to hide their folly in depths that naught dis-  
 close.

Awake thou, then, that sleepest! Arise from out the tomb,  
 And Christ shall shine upon thee and banish all thy gloom!  
 Redeem each passing moment, nor spend it like the fool,  
 The days down here are evil, but soon our King shall rule.

Follow not the errant leading of your own poor errant will,  
*Ignis fatuus*, strange and fickle, lighting up the paths of  
 ill;  
 Seek the very best of guidance, let the will of Christ con-  
 trol,  
 It will lead your falt'ring footsteps till you reach the  
 longed-for goal.

Be not drunk with fruit of vintage gathered in some  
 worldly way,  
 Wine is but a grand deluder, holding o'er its victims sway,  
 Rather let the blessed Spirit fill the mind, control the  
 heart,  
 Till it bursts forth into singing and the tears of glad-  
 ness start,  
 Psalm and hymn and song outpouring thanks and praises  
 to the Lord,  
 Each with each in gladness joining in melodious accord,

Wives, submit yourselves to husbands as ye yield unto the  
 Lord,  
 He your head as Christ the Church's, loved and honored  
 and adored.  
 Husbands, love your wives and cherish all the sweetness  
 of the tie,  
 Just as Christ once loved the Church and gave Himself for  
 it to die.

He would sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the  
Word,  
Make it shine in all His beauty, when His purpose, long  
deferred,  
Shall at last bear fine fruition, and His Bride before Him  
stand,  
Every spot and wrinkle vanished, shining in Immanuel's  
land.  
Let the husband's love to wife be image of the Master's  
love,  
She his richest earthly treasure till he reach the Home  
above.

As the body to the head is, so the wife unto her lord,  
Let him nourish her and cherish, all his love on her out-  
poured;  
No man hateth his own body, never let him hate his wife,  
Rather let him yield up for her all the strength of all his  
life;  
Thus the Christ hath loved and cherished her He'd chosen  
for His Bride,  
Left His home of song and gladness and in anguish suf-  
fered, died,  
That henceforth in blessed union she with Him fore'er  
remain,  
Having washed away her sinning and removed her every  
stain.

*Chapter Six*

Children, would ye pass in gladness days of sunshine here  
    below,  
Not a mist their brightness veiling, radiant with morn-  
    ing's glow?  
Sacrifice upon the altar all the strivings of your will,  
Let your parents' wise commandments be your guard from  
    every ill;  
They are given you for guidance with the blessing of the  
    Lord,  
And ye'll reap a gladsome harvest, when the golden  
    sheaves are stored.  
And ye fathers, see ye to it that ye stir not up to wrath  
Youthful hearts that beat expectant as they mount the  
    upward path,  
Bring them up in His kind nurture, in whose arms they  
    refuge found,  
Nestling ever closer to Him, with a royal welcome crowned.

Servants, yield ye to your masters loyalty and service  
    true,  
Not as pleasing them, but loving all the will of Christ  
    to do;  
They but give you temp'ral wages, flitting off with fleeting  
    time,  
He will pour into your storehouse treasures of His love  
    sublime.  
Will of God He once accomplished, will of God He'd have  
    you do,  
Blessed will, to which obedient you will find a blessing too.  
And ye masters, serve your servants; threaten not, nor  
    angry be;  
One your Master is in heaven, He will seek account of  
    thee;

Earth's distinctions all will vanish when the gates of  
heaven rise,  
Beggars then will sit with princes in the glories of the  
skies.

In the power of the Lord, in the strength of His might,  
Be strong, O ye Christians, and arm for the fight,  
For Satan is wily, and hosts at his side,  
World-rulers of darkness, with arrogant pride,  
Are leagued for the conflict 'gainst you and the Lord,  
And hot is their hatred and fierce their accord.  
No weakness of flesh have you to oppose  
But demonic hosts of panoplied foes.  
Ah, evil the day that dawns on the man  
Armed not in accordance with God's wondrous plan!  
Stand fast in the Lord, in the strength of His might,  
Yield never an inch in the terrible fight.  
Arm, arm for the conflict; the foe is at hand,  
And round you the hosts of iniquity stand!  
Put on the whole armor, tis tested and tried,  
And One is your Captain, He stands at your side.  
Gird up then your loins with invincible truth,  
Let no craven lie sap the strength of your youth;  
Put on the bright breastplate of righteousness o'er  
The breast of a soldier who's true to the core;  
Be shod your firm feet in the gospel of peace,  
Ye fight to cause war forever to cease,  
And bring in the reign of God's chosen Man,  
When Jesus shall rule according to plan.  
Stretch out the strong shield of faith to the fore,  
Like bulwark against the missiles that pour  
From quivers of hate, in a fierce burning tide,  
All barbed in the workshops of devilish pride.  
Flash out from the scabbard the Spirit's bright sword,  
And pierce your dread foe, with "Thus saith the Lord,"  
Then kneel on the earth, in the spirit of prayer,  
And pour out your thanks to the Lord for His care.